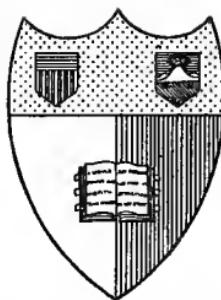


THE SANDS OF FATE

SIR THOMAS BARCLAY

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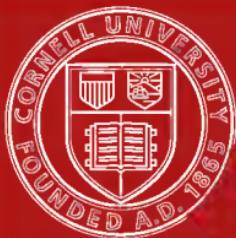
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THE SANDS OF FATE

THE SANDS OF FATE

Dramatised Study of an
Imperial Conscience

A Phantasپ

BY

SIR THOMAS BARCLAY



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

1917

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A.377016

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Published October 1917

P R E F A C E

PART I and Part II of the present phantasy appeared in August, 1915, and March, 1916, in the *Nineteenth Century*, and I have to acknowledge the courtesy of the Editor, Mr. Wray Skilbeck, in allowing me to reproduce them.

Of Part I, Dr. Arthur Shadwell wrote in the January issue of the same *Review*: —

There was in the August number of this *Review* a brilliant sketch, cast in dramatic form, which received far less notice than it deserved. It was by Sir Thomas Barclay, and was entitled "The Sands of Fate — Berlin, July 24-31, 1914: A Historical Phantasy." It purports to give the history of the week preceding the declaration of war in a series of scenes enacted at Potsdam between the Kaiser and his chief advisers, and it represents him vacillating between peace and war, until the issue is finally decided by the crowds outside cheering for war.

I believe that this "historical phantasy" represents with singular felicity the interplay of the several influences which determined the fatal decision and their relative importance. A good many writers about war and peace and Germany might study it with advantage. It is undeniable that the war chimed with popular sentiment in Germany, and has been supported with general enthusiasm and devotion.

This testimony of a keen observer like Dr. Shadwell is so precious that I venture to give it as a precursory gloss.

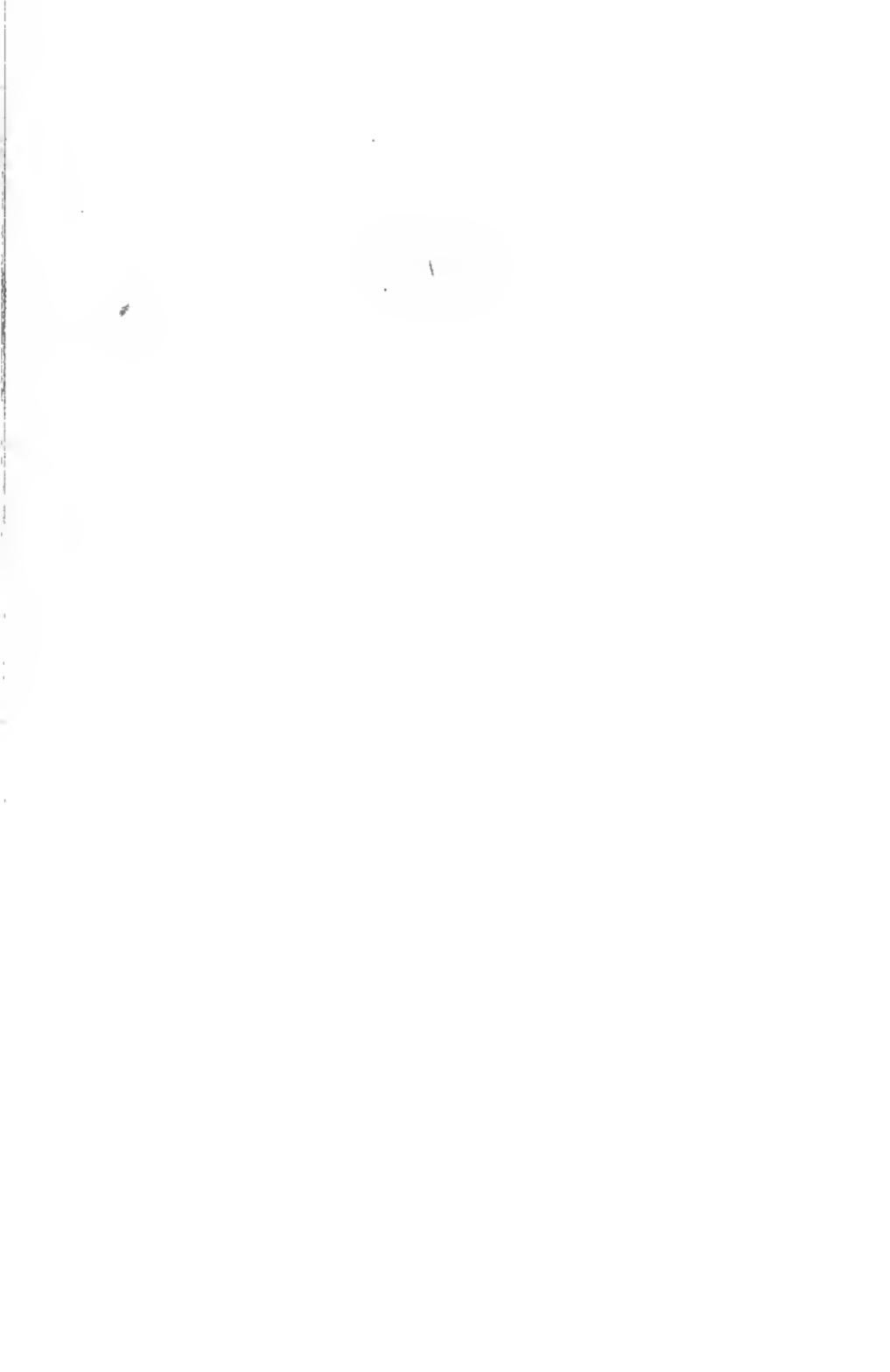
After terminating the above, I hear from Copenhagen that the censors have forbidden the pub-

lication of a translation of the “phantasy” into Danish which had been made by a distinguished Professor of the University.

A similar fate, a short time ago, overtook a translation into French, when it was about to appear at The Hague. The prohibition in the latter case, I have since been informed, was due to the action of the German Minister Plenipotentiary, who described it as “poisoned gas”!

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN the first part of this phantasy appeared in the *Nineteenth Century*, I wrote by way of foreword:—

I call this drama a “historical phantasy.” In Germany it might be called “Wahrheit und Dichtung,” as Goethe called his Memoirs. But is not the imaginative part of history, as guessed by those who knew the actors personally, possibly nearer the truth than “facts” about which no two witnesses agree?

In an appendix will, nevertheless, be found a chronology of the undisputed facts on which it is founded.

The incident of the communication to the Kaiser of the telegram announcing the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife was told me by a distinguished person who was on board the Kaiser’s yacht at the time and caught the tube thrown by the officer of the motor-boat which overtook the yacht to deliver it.

Some of the Kaiser’s observations and reflections were made to myself; others have been repeated to me by those to whom they were made.

References by different personages to matters and events not generally known, such as Admiral von Tirpitz’s interest in the working of parliamentary government in England and the Professor’s revelation respecting the Czar’s decision for

peace in January, 1904, also belong to my personal repertory.

Of the essential characters, only Von Etting and the Gräfin Emma are imaginary. The others are all living persons. I knew most of them in the flesh and have selected them to serve as types of different tendencies of a civilisation "on the make." Herren Ballin and Possehl are North-Germans, characteristic of the independent spirit, common sense, and commercial integrity of the merchant princes of the ancient Hanse towns. Prince von Bülow represents the spirit of Jean Paul Richter, the famous German satirist, a spirit which "culture" has never succeeded in eradicating. Herren von Jagow and the imaginary von Etting are more or less his diplomatic pupils. Herren von Gwinner and von Helfferich are managers of the Deutsche Bank; the latter has been chosen by the Kaiser to be Vice-Chancellor. They are sensible, enterprising men. Both were intensely pro-English in their sympathies before the War and both sought to react against the currents of international hostility which had been threatening peace for the previous ten years. Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg is the typical Prussian official, honest, *pflichtgetreu*, short-sighted, and efficient. Bernhardi is the cast-iron Prussian soldier, incapable of originality or philosophic detachment (the antithesis of the Horatian Bülow), a collector of facts favourable to his special thesis, indifferent to all considerations of generosity, national honour, or humanity, the man who thinks war is a *Ding an sich*, and the spokesman of the

many foolish Germans who fancy they are expressing a wise and unanswerable truth when they tell you "War is war." Dr. Liebknecht and President Kaempf speak for themselves. Nobody worked harder than the latter to avert the present catastrophe. He represents the spirit of Neo-Liberalism in the Empire.

Then there is the Kaiser, who may remain for history the most conspicuous personality of contemporary Europe, who, after having raised his country to stupendous heights of prosperity, allowed himself to be dragged into the maddest speculation upon which a nation ever embarked, and will remain responsible for all time for not having used his power at the critical moment to avert war. I have endeavoured to portray him as he was, or as I knew him, not as a fire-eating, bloodthirsty potentate responsible for the horrors and crimes of the present War, but as of impulsive character, anxious for knowledge, impatient of resistance to his own schemes of national betterment, impetuous in their realisation, not scholarly like his great ancestor, but like him in his interest in current problems of mind and matter.

Lastly, there is the Kaiserin, whose heart at length revolts, kind, religious, and above all motherly, practical in her outlook, and accessible to facts which are too near for perception by those whose eyes are focussed on the horizon.

I have frequently been asked to say whom I mean by the Professor. I have, it is true, a good, sound, old-fashioned German in mind, but why

should I put a name to a character who would be lynched to-morrow if he expressed a tithe of the criticism I attribute to him.

I need hardly say that this phantasy is not intended to exacerbate hatred between the belligerents. The War cannot change the geographical fact that we are all destined, whatever the outcome of the War, to go on living side by side as before. Perhaps a future generation will judge the present one severely for the silence or want of courage of superior minds at a time when leadership was needed, for the fact that no statesman was ready to risk his popularity and warn Europe against the unscrupulous politicians and wire-pullers who, on all sides, were sowing the seeds of international hatred and preparing the way for the greatest breakdown of statesmanship and diplomacy in the annals of mankind.

There will be Germans among my readers. Let them not forget that English and American statesmen struggled in vain to bring Germany to a sense of the danger of the excessive expenditure on armaments into which she was forcing her neighbours, that they even humiliated themselves before her in the hope of bringing her rulers to realise the danger to European peace; that she threatened to wreck the Hague Conference of 1907 by withdrawing from it if the question of armaments was discussed. On the eve of that conference I wrote in a volume published on the day it began:¹

¹ *Problems of International Practice and Diplomacy.* (Boston Book Company, 1907.)

Young ambitious nations in the buoyant venturesomeness of youth may be tempted to regard the more or less permanent settlement of the affairs of mankind, in which the older nations are setting an example, as contrary to their interest. Isolation of any nation, however, is not only an economic, but is also a military, danger to itself in the presence of possible combinations of nations. Advantages for attack provoke a corresponding counter-development of the forces of resistance. A state which declines to listen to the peaceful overtures of its neighbours, on the ground that it would be quixotic to curtail its disproportionate ability to assail them, necessarily soon finds itself obliged, in the alternative, to increase its strength for the purposes of possible defence. And thus competition in armaments and combinations continue in response to realities of self-preservation which can have no end till this insensate rivalry is checked by an international agreement.

The War is the outcome of the deaf ear consistently turned by German statesmen to overtures of which the above passage reflects the underlying sense.

Nor must they dream that, because there are thousands of Americans and Englishmen who have retained their mental balance, there are any who think the War can end before Europe is emancipated from the bullying and perilous insolence of the Prussian oligarchy, or, shut out as they are from the outer world and at present inaccessible to its influences, that their military successes have excited a moment's doubt among civilised mankind of the ultimate success of their enemies. To on-lookers the War appears as a struggle in which the civilised world is arrayed against states which have made themselves notorious for the inhuman

conduct of their soldiery. Turkish massacres of Armenians, Bulgarian atrocities in the Balkan wars, the German conduct in Belgium, the sinking of the Lusitania, the murders of Miss Cavell and Captain Fryatt, and other gratuitous horrors give a character to the struggle in which anxiety for the success of the more humane, civilised Western Allies is universal.

Why do not the kind, peaceable, hard-working German people, who have made the industrial and commercial prosperity and real power of Germany which the Prussian military caste despised and has at length been successful in crushing, revolt at the shame their Prussian leaders have brought upon them? Have they been so emasculated by drill that they dare not? Signs there are, it is true, that the scales are falling from their eyes. This phantasy endeavours to picture a possible *dénouement* in which wiser men than those who engineered the War ultimately procure the downfall of Germany's real foes — the real foes who, under the mask of saving her, have followed the example of the Napoleonic dynasty in 1870 to save themselves.

And so history from generation to generation repeats itself, and the folly of man shifts its centre from nation to nation like the wind and the storm, and the least likely may, in turn, become its victims, in spite of every argument of reason, interest, and national tradition.

Before the War there were eminent persons both in England and America who feared that national manliness and capacity for the higher moral

emotions would be undermined by a long period of peace. I venture, on this subject and by way of conclusion, to quote another passage from my book of 1907:—

The growth of democratic feeling has in no country tended to deprive it of its power to feel the thrill of indignation, of its will to assert its just rights by material sacrifice, or of its courage to shed its blood for a righteous cause. But there have been wars neither righteous nor necessary, nor even useful, and democracy may become capable of making distinctions for itself, for unquestionably there are unconscious workings of the public mind which develop in capacity. Everybody whose business it is or who chooses to watch its moods and evolution knows how it is affected by every breath of feeling, as a tree rustles to every breath of wind, and how a furious blast may strain it to snapping. Still the root of human reason gains strength from every gust; and, if Western peoples grow more peaceful because more reasonable, this can be no parallel to the historic cases of sybarite or subject peoples emasculated by long periods of non-responsibility.

The present War has exemplified the truth of this anticipation. The democracies of the world have now all joined hands in the surrounding, for its destruction, of the last stronghold of a system which is only different from brigandage in the scale on which it is conducted.

PART I
THE SANDS OF FATE
(*BERLIN, JULY 24-31, 1914*)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PART I

THE KAISER.

THE KAISERIN.

THE CROWN PRINCE.

DR. VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, *Imperial Chancellor.*

HERR VON JAGOW, *Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

GRAND ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ, *Minister for the Navy.*

HERR BALLIN, *General Manager of the Hamburg-Amerika Steamship Company.*

THE PROFESSOR.

GRÄFIN EMMA, *lady-in-waiting.*

HERR VON ETTING, *Private Secretary to the KAISER.*

FIRST AND SECOND A.D.C.

A SPY.

ATTENDANTS.

PART I THE SANDS OF FATE

ACT I

JULY 24

THE KAISERIN seated at a work-table before an open window at the Neues-Palais at Potsdam — flowers, photographs, silver trinkets. Knitting. Few moments.

Enter GRÄFIN EMMA, clad in black silk, who stands respectfully while the KAISERIN, absorbed in thought, continues knitting.

KAISERIN (*on perceiving her*)

What a start you gave me, Emma! I wish you would n't steal into the room like that.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Shall I knock before entering?

KAISERIN

Like poor old Grandmamma's servants, no! Well?

GRÄFIN EMMA

His Imperial Highness has arrived and asks if Your Majesty can receive him.

KAISERIN (*straightening her sleeves and dress*)
Of course! At once.

[Exit GRÄFIN EMMA. The KAISERIN stands up, pulls a chair closer, adjusts photographs, smells a rose. Steps heard. Knock at door. Come in.

Enter the CROWN PRINCE, who folds his mother in his arms. Unbuckles and hangs his sword on a peg.

KAISERIN

My darling boy! Why, what's happened?

CROWN PRINCE

Great things, mother! War, mother!

KAISERIN

Good God, Willie! With whom?

CROWN PRINCE

Everybody, perhaps, — but war as sure as there is a God in heaven.

KAISERIN

Oh, no, no, no. We want no more wars.

CROWN PRINCE

Can't be helped. Sit down, mother dear, and I will explain the whole thing to you.

KAISERIN

That's why you came?

CROWN PRINCE

Yes, of course.

KAISERIN

Darling boy! What about your father?

CROWN PRINCE

Oh, he'll know in good time.

KAISERIN

Heavens, Willie. You don't mean he knows nothing about what you are going to tell me?

CROWN PRINCE

Oh, yes, he does, but you know his happy-go-lucky way, always thinking things will come out right by merely waiting. People are getting so impatient about his dilly-dallying — always preparing for war, and beating the drum and doing nothing — that the guns will go off by themselves, and the wrong way, and then *exeunt* the Hohenzollerns.

KAISERIN

I know your father has too many irons in the fire, and he won't listen to anybody but that awful Professor and his Jew friends.

CROWN PRINCE

It's very trying.

KAISERIN

Yes, but we must just put up with what God has given us.

CROWN PRINCE

He'll be awfully wild. There he is with some forty men-of-war boring himself and all his staff at Balholmen with peasant regattas, lunching with every Tom, Dick, and Harry, making field-marshals stand about in idleness, while that awful band makes you deaf. Says it's a good thing for their nerves to have nothing to do or think about for a few weeks!

KAISERIN

Don't talk disrespectfully of your father like that, Willie.

CROWN PRINCE

I can't help it. You know it, too, mother. It's exasperating, this dilettante optimism of father's. He forgets that I have to succeed him. . . . To think that I have never been able to have a serious conversation with him . . .

KAISERIN

I can't allow you . . .

CROWN PRINCE

Sorry. But things are too serious, and he is n't serious enough. (*Rising and walking up and down angrily.*) A nice mess we are in! After all the expense and effort! We'll be out of it now, thanks to never-mind-whom. Well, this is what I came to tell you, mother.

KAISERIN (*leaning back to listen*)

Go on, dear.

CROWN PRINCE

You won't interrupt me, will you, mother, because I feel anxious and irritable, and I can't help mentioning father with irritation? After all, children are only what their parents make them, and if I am disrespectful I am only just as he was himself before me.

[*The KAISERIN frowns.*

All right, dearest mother! you, at any rate, are a good sound German. There is no English dilettantism about you, thank God!

KAISERIN (*laughing*)

Why, my darling, your cousins say you are the most English of the family.

CROWN PRINCE (*testily*)

Thanks! Please let us be serious . . . (*A pause.*) You know Germany is the laughing-stock of the world. Everybody is a laughing-stock who gallops his horse to the edge of the ditch and then wheels round. That's what we have been doing ever since father came to the throne.

KAISERIN

But he has kept the peace, dear.

CROWN PRINCE

But at what price? The ridicule and contempt of everybody!

[*The KAISERIN gives an incredulous look.*

Yes, mother, the contempt of the whole world. Every twopenny-halfpenny little State thinks it can

smack Germany in the face with impunity. And as for the Great Powers, look at this meeting at Petersburg, the contemptuous way in which the French have walked round Germany to go there, as if we were a sleeping dog. It makes my blood boil. Father has no sense of dignity or he would . . .

KAISERIN

My darling, you forget yourself.

CROWN PRINCE

Then look at Italy. Even our ally snaps her finger at us, takes the best slices of Africa without even consulting us, while we have to go hat-in-hand to get any dirty swamp any other Power is kind enough not to want. Look at the way England puts her foot down and dictates to us. We can't get a coaling-station, because she puts her foot down. We can't get a railway completed, though it is built with German capital in an independent country, because England puts her foot down. France takes a huge quarter of the best that Africa can offer, and we are not allowed to have even an inch of it, though we have more important interests there than France. Why? Because England puts her foot down. It makes me boil. Yet father . . .

KAISERIN

Do leave your father out of it.

CROWN PRINCE

I can't, mother. I feel it too strongly . . . Well, we are sick of it. We are sick of this constant humiliation.

KAISERIN

We!

CROWN PRINCE

Yes, the whole German people is sick of it, and it is coming to this: either father must move with his subjects or his subjects will move without him.

KAISERIN

What do you mean?

CROWN PRINCE

I mean father is becoming thoroughly unpopular (*unbeliebt*).

KAISERIN

Why don't you tell your father this?

CROWN PRINCE

It's no use. He takes nothing seriously. I know what he would say: "My dear boy" — he forgets I am a man and a father — "my dear boy, I have pledged my life to the prosperity and peace of Germany. For what you do after me you will be responsible. Meanwhile, let me attend to my job my own way." I don't think that fair to me, and it is not serious. Father is too pleasure-loving . . .

KAISERIN

My dear boy, how mistaken you are about your father! You may say he is frivolous — he is so dreadfully English, just like his poor mother —

always fussing about this and that. Yet she did get things done, and so does your father. How the Berliners hated her for giving lessons in hygiene to the German architects. Yet there you are. They did what she told them, and Berlin is a model of cleanliness to the world. You don't know what an awful place your Marmor-palais was till she took it in hand. Your father is just like her. I dare say after he's dead he'll be appreciated. [Whispering.]

CROWN PRINCE (*shortly*)

Perhaps . . . He's meanwhile very, very trying. Well, let me go on. The Powers of the Entente are preparing for war as hard as they can. England is leading them on.

KAISERIN

England!

CROWN PRINCE

Yes, mother, England and France. Russia plays the fool's part.

KAISERIN

Don't believe that, Willie.

CROWN PRINCE

I say "plays."

KAISERIN (*takes up her knitting*)

I see — that may be.

CROWN PRINCE

They are all eaten up with jealousy — especially England.

KAISERIN

Jealousy of what, dear?

CROWN PRINCE

Why, of Germany's prosperity, of course.

KAISERIN

Well!

CROWN PRINCE

Well, they want to destroy her prosperity. As soon as they are ready, they will fall on her like wild beasts and tear her to pieces out of mere spite. We can't wait for that. If fight we must, we must choose the moment which suits us best and not let them choose it.

[*A pause.*

KAISERIN

Well!

CROWN PRINCE

That moment is now.

KAISERIN (*standing up and putting her hands on the CROWN PRINCE's shoulders and looking into his eyes*)

[*A pause.*

My boy, you know how dear you are to me, my first-born. . . . I hope you are only relieving your

feelings in speaking to me like this, merely confessing your inner self to your loving mother. What does your father say to this?

CROWN PRINCE

He knows nothing.

KAISERIN

What? Your father . . .

CROWN PRINCE

That's why I am telling you, mother.

KAISERIN

Telling me what?

CROWN PRINCE

There will be war before a week is out.

KAISERIN (*almost shrieking*)

What!

CROWN PRINCE

It can't be helped. What did you think we wanted the war levy for? [The KAISERIN speechless.]

We have just got our siege-guns. We are ready, ready, ready as we have never been before, and everybody else is unprepared. The war will be over before Christmas, and we shall be supreme in Europe. Instead of being sneered at as mere swash-bucklers, even England will no longer put her foot down — Oh! the brutes. You don't know how I

hate England. We all do. Every true German hates England.

KAISERIN

Then your war would be against England?

CROWN PRINCE

Indeed it would. This is the plan. We shall be in Paris before Russia is mobilised or before England has made up her mind, and then we smash up England, and that opens up America to us.

[KAISERIN (*surprised*)

America! And the Americans?

CROWN PRINCE

The Americans! Another of father's fads! As if the Americans would ever do anything for sentiment's sake! Besides, it's a mean sort of thing — going about seeking friends for Germany. The only true friends are those who are afraid to be your enemies. We must have Brazil, and have it we shall.

KAISERIN

Why, dear, these are terrible things, and the United States your father loves so much.

[*Rather scornfully.*

CROWN PRINCE

“Much noise and little wool.” We shall soon double them up when England's power is gone.

KAISERIN (*in a tone of humouring an angry man*)
But what would the war be about?

CROWN PRINCE

Oh! really nothing very particular — probably the Austrian grievance.

KAISERIN

The *Austrian* grievance!

CROWN PRINCE

It's the same thing. We'll come in as Austria's saviour again. That's better than having a grievance of our own, and it will appeal to German sentiment.

KAISERIN

Oh, men, men! How you all like fighting!

CROWN PRINCE (*buckling on his sword again*)

I wanted to tell you beforehand, because you have a great influence over father and I hope you will not use it against us,—I mean *me*,—for this war is necessarily a war affecting the future more than the present, and the future is my job. God knows I don't want to be Kaiser. I would far rather be simply an irresponsible younger son. But I feel the pride of my race in my veins and will not follow the example of those mad Bavarians and Austrians. Hohenzollern to the bone, what I am born to do I will do, and do to the full.

KAISERIN (*gives him her hand, which he kisses*)

But you are mistaken, darling, in fancying I have any influence over your father.

CROWN PRINCE

Oh, you only have to flatter him a bit. I never saw anybody more easily led by flattery than good old father. He is really a good sort, but these are no times for mere talk. Germany can only continue to live among her ravenous neighbours by daunting them as a lion-tamer daunts his lions, by lashing them, by firing at them, by killing them, if need be. *Au revoir*, dear mother. Don't tell father I have seen you. Nobody knows but Emma. [Exit

[The KAISERIN settles down to her knitting, takes a pocket-handkerchief out of her satchel, and bends over it on to her work-table.

Enter GRÄFIN EMMA, who makes a little noise purposely.

KAISERIN (*starting*)

Oh! Emma, what a start you gave me! I wish you would come in without making such a noise.

GRÄFIN EMMA

I will do my best, Your Majesty.

KAISERIN

Emma, have you heard this terrible news?

GRÄFIN EMMA

What news, Ma'am?

KAISERIN

Why, about the war.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am, vaguely.

KAISERIN

Why did you not tell me?

GRÄFIN EMMA

I thought Your Majesty knew.

KAISERIN

Knew what?

GRÄFIN EMMA

That war is imminent.

KAISERIN

But I know nothing, dear Emma. His Majesty keeps everything to himself. He never tells me anything. It is terrible, Emma. What does anybody want war for?

GRÄFIN EMMA

They say it's a preventive war. I don't know exactly what's meant by a preventive war. I suppose a sort of smaller war to prevent a greater one.

KAISERIN

That's like inoculation, Emma. The doctors give you a light attack of smallpox to prevent you getting a worse one.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Perhaps that's what is meant.

KAISERIN

Nonsense!

GRÄFIN EMMA

Your Majesty knows better than I do.

KAISERIN

They might just as well put up persons to commit small crimes to prevent greater crimes. It's utterly silly. I hope you don't listen to such stuff, Emma, and much less repeat it. Who told you?

GRÄFIN EMMA

It's common talk since the ultimatum to Serbia.

KAISERIN

What has the Serbian affair to do with Germany?

GRÄFIN EMMA

They say the Serbian affair is the mere pretext, and it's a godsend which enables us to bring on the war at once.

KAISERIN

But what war, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

I hope Your Majesty will forgive my not being able to give her a very clear account of the matter. England, France, and Russia have entered into a treaty to deliver an ultimatum to Germany.

KAISERIN

How do you know, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

I don't know, Your Majesty. I am only saying what I hear.

KAISERIN

But where did you hear it?

GRÄFIN EMMA

It is the common talk at Court.

KAISERIN

Do you mean the Secretaries, and A.D.C.'s and Ladies?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am, and officials and nearly everybody.

KAISERIN

And I know nothing about it! Well, go on, Emma, about this ultimatum.

GRÄFIN EMMA

The ultimatum is to be about armaments. They will call upon Germany to accept a discussion on the reduction of armaments . . .

KAISERIN

What impudence!

GRÄFIN EMMA

And, if Germany refuses, will present a scheme for their reduction. If she refuses to accept it, then war.

KAISERIN

It's too absurd, Emma. And who told you this?

GRÄFIN EMMA

It's common talk, Ma'am.

KAISERIN

Do they say who is at the back of this?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, England — that is, Sir Edward Grey. And America and Italy are expected to join them.

KAISERIN

Ridiculous. And people believe it's true! Do you believe it?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am.

KAISERIN

Why, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

I hope Your Majesty will pardon my expressing an opinion of my own, but as Your Majesty requests me . . .

KÄISERIN

Yes, Emma. I ask you to tell me frankly what you think.

GRÄFIN EMMA

I think it true, because it seems very probable that if one country gets very powerful and makes other countries spend more money than they can afford, they should combine against it.

KÄISERIN

But Germany threatens nobody, and His Majesty is a man of peace.

GRÄFIN EMMA

But His Majesty won't listen to dictation, and, least of all, about the army and navy.

KÄISERIN

Of *course* not, Emma. But why is England doing this?

GRÄFIN EMMA

England, they say, is in such terror about our splendid navy that many people have actually gone mad and write quite insane things in the newspapers about it.

KÄISERIN

What are they afraid of?

GRÄFIN EMMA

That we should attack them, destroy their navy, I suppose.

KAISERIN

Well, now about the supposed-to-be-coming war.

GRÄFIN EMMA

We are not going to wait till they're ready.

KAISERIN

So that's what they mean by a preventive war. Emma, it's very dreadful.

Enter LADY-IN-WAITING

LADY (*handing a large envelope*)

His Majesty has sent a special despatch to you, Ma'am. Herr von Etting sends it to Your Majesty with his profound respect.

KAISERIN

Thank you. (*Exit LADY.*) (*Opening despatch and reading.*) His Majesty has left Norway and will be here to-morrow. Emma, you must be right. He would never have come back after just arriving, if there had not been something terrible to bring him back. Don't mention to anybody that His Imperial Highness has been here. His Majesty might put a wrong construction on his visit, just at this time. (*Stands up.*) I am getting too fat, Emma. When His Majesty is away, I don't take enough exercise. Come and take a look at the roses. Nature is so beautiful just now and bids us all to tenderness and love. [*Speaking as they disappear into a verandah.*]

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE I

JULY 27

The KAISER's working study in the Neues-Palais at Potsdam. Pictures of Emperors William the First and Frederick, the Empress Frederick, Queen Victoria, etc., and photographs scattered over the desk and guéridons. Desk and furniture Louis the Fifteenth. Telephone, panel of call-buttons.

Doors are flung open and VON ETTING, a young and elegantly clad man, enters hurriedly with a despatch-box, and places it on the desk, looks at the quills and ink, tries a quill, and takes a general survey.

Telephone rings. VON ETTING sits down at the desk and puts the receiver to his ear.

VON ETTING

No, not yet, Highness. Yes, Highness, certainly. (Pause.) But we have had no communication yet. I will ring him up and let you know at once.

[*Replaces receiver and presses a button. Ring.*

Takes up receiver again.

Excellency von Etting speaking. (Pause.) His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince wishes to know at once if you have news of His Majesty's train. Passed Stendhal? Many thanks.

[*In frantic haste, presses another button, and puts receiver to his ear.*

Yes! Von Etting speaking. His Majesty's train

has passed Stendhal. Passed full steam up. Yes, Highness; yes, Highness; yes, Highness. Round-about way, but it's easier to clear the line.

[Pause and a laugh, puts down receiver.

Presses button, takes it up again.

His Majesty has passed Stendhal. (*Pause.*) Yes. (*Receiver is replaced.*)

[A low horn is heard sounded from different sides, tramp of soldiers and lowering of arms, short beating of a drum outside. Door flung open. Two A.D.C.'s enter, and salute VON ETTING and shake hands. All three look grave and concerned.

FIRST A.D.C.

Looks serious this time, eh?

VON ETTING

Very.

SECOND A.D.C.

High time it did.

FIRST A.D.C.

A beastly nuisance, all the same.

SECOND A.D.C.

Trenches instead of wenches.

FIRST A.D.C.

Oh, shut up! There'll be no trenches, no time to make 'em. We shall just dash through everything. It will all be over in a month.

SECOND A.D.C.

No, my son, you err like every swain on the brink of matrimony. There will be no war or a long 'un. Is it war, Etting?

[VON ETTING, sitting on edge of desk gives an affirmative nod.

FIRST A.D.C.

We could have been told that just as well at Berlin, instead of making us come down to this hole. I hate Potsdam.

SECOND A.D.C.

I sympathise with you, my son.

[FIRST A.D.C. shakes his head knowingly to VON ETTING. Gives a shrug to signify abandonment of all hope to make SECOND A.D.C. take things seriously.

VON ETTING

You fellows had better be off.

BOTH

There's plenty of time.

FIRST A.D.C.

I say, Etting, why is he coming here instead of going to Berlin?

VON ETTING

I don't know.

FIRST A.D.C.

It's odd all the same.

VON ETTING

Off you go. The Admiral's announced.

Enter ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ and the PROFESSOR
[A.D.C.'s *salute* — *exeunt*.]

VON ETTING

His Majesty has passed Stendhal. He will not be here for a few minutes anyhow, if you care to sit here.

[*Exit*.]

VON TIRPITZ

I understand perfectly, Professor, but His Majesty knows nothing about history, and like all men of action thinks he makes it. It only irritates him to hear history spoken of as if his actions were determined for him by circumstances over which he has no control.

PROFESSOR

To say that anything which happens is any individual's fault is mere pedantry, so far as history is concerned.

VON TIRPITZ

You must admit that the Russian mobilisation was ordered by somebody?

PROFESSOR

I admit it was ordered by somebody, but why was it ordered by somebody?

VON TIRPITZ

I suppose in Russia nobody knows who orders anything.

PROFESSOR

That's true. In the Russo-Japanese War, nobody has yet been found to bear the blame for an order of the Czar, countersigned by his Minister of Foreign Affairs and accepting the Japanese conditions, never having reached its destination. [Pause.]

VON TIRPITZ

We can't go on eternally living on the brink of a volcano as we have been doing for a quarter of a century.

PROFESSOR

Yet for countless ages the Campanian peasants grew their vineyards to the very top of Mount Vesuvius, though the top was a flat surface on which nothing would grow, and all the time the population was warned of its danger by rumblings and growlings within the volcanic cone.

VON TIRPITZ

A clever German engineer, I suppose, would have canalised its forces.

PROFESSOR

Yes, and burst the cone, and that's just what our clever political engineers are doing now.

VON TIRPITZ

Well, we don't know the result yet.

PROFESSOR

Nor do we know whether clever Roman engineers were not responsible for bursting the cone in A.D. 79.

VON TIRPITZ

It had to come, Professor.

PROFESSOR

Everything that has happened in history has had to come. Nations have lives of different lengths like individuals. All may have their day, with patience and perseverance. To force the pace is pure and simple speculation. And a war between the Entente and the Alliance Powers is staking all upon a single card.

VON TIRPITZ

England won't budge. If you had been at Kiel and heard the friendly speeches of the naval commanders a fortnight ago, you would have been satisfied that England had given up her distrust of our navy. She did not at first realise that her command of the sea could be disputed. She is yielding to facts as she always does. That's what we lack, Professor. Our progress and prosperity, instead of curing us of dreaming, has only confirmed us in the habit. I have sent all my children to England to learn to see facts and face them instead of dreaming about them.

PROFESSOR

The German people are patriotic and genuinely

ready for all sacrifices for the welfare of the nation, but they still lack the sense of national responsibility.

VON TIRPITZ

That's it. In other words, we have not yet had time to digest the empire. German pride of Germany is merely skin-deep. When every German feels the empire belongs to him and that he is personally responsible for its acts and being (*Wesen*), then facts will have their full significance for him.

PROFESSOR

War will only awaken that sense of responsibility if Germany is defeated. Victory will merely confirm the German in his trust in authority and dreams.

VON TIRPITZ

Some years ago I thought we might borrow from England some sort of Ministerial responsibility, and got our Naval Attaché there at the time to send me over a report on the connexion of Parliament with the Admiralty, but I found it was just this department that is most independent of Parliament.

PROFESSOR

Foreign affairs, too.

VON TIRPITZ

When you think of it, that is strange for a free country. But in the case of the Admiralty the sys-

tem is entirely bureaucratic. So there was nothing to borrow for my department.

PROFESSOR

And as regards foreign affairs we have gone farther than England in the democratisation of the service already.

VON TIRPITZ

Well, I took the liberty of suggesting to His Majesty that a trial might be made with the new department of the colonies, and it was tried, but the worst of a bureaucracy is that its very efficiency blocks reform.

Enter BALLIN

BALLIN

How are you, Admiral? (*Shaking hands.*) And you, my dear Professor? (*Shaking hands.*)

PROFESSOR

So, so! Ballin.

BALLIN

This is damnation work.

PROFESSOR

It could n't be helped.

BALLIN

Could n't be helped? Do you know it spells ruin for the whole of North Germany?

PROFESSOR

Many things that could n't be helped have spelt ruin to nations before this.

BALLIN

Well?

PROFESSOR

Governments get credit for a great deal more power than they possess. Even our dear Kaiser has only the power over the rudder which the machinery gives him. The slightest derangement of the machinery and it won't work. The Czar is the mere rudder himself, with a Court rabble squabbling at the helm.

BALLIN

And Divine right?

PROFESSOR

A shibboleth and a very good one with an undeveloped agricultural population, like the East Prussians.

BALLIN (*impatiently*)

If the Government is not to blame, who is? The Kaiser himself?

PROFESSOR

No, neither the Kaiser nor his Government.

BALLIN

The army?

PROFESSOR

The army has no power in the matter at all. . . .
(*A pause.*) It is the German people itself.

BALLIN

Then it's the accursed teaching in your universities is to blame, your schools . . .

PROFESSOR

Not to blame, but one of the causes, among which are your accursed business methods.

BALLIN

There you are right, Professor. The curse of German business is ruthlessness. I admit it because I have to fight it every day of my life. (*Angrily.*) Every other business German is a bandit who . . .

[*Talking.*

PROFESSOR

All pioneers are more or less bandits, and German business is still in a pioneer stage. The English who founded their Colonial Empire were all bandits. The founders of Rome were bandits. Even in modern Europe, what was Napoleon but a bandit with instincts of the worst type of banditism?¹ What was the French Revolution but a successful banditti raid?

BALLIN

Yes, I suppose you are right, and that is why German business is so unpopular. Of course, there is jealousy.

¹ The speaker, of course, refers to Napoleon's Corsican origin.

PROFESSOR

Rather.

BALLIN

Even Professors suffer from that little failing.

PROFESSOR

Who does not?

BALLIN

Even statesmen.)

PROFESSOR

Even kings!

BALLIN

Even emperors!

PROFESSOR

Even whole peoples.

VON TIRPITZ (*who has been listening with an amused look*)

I must go to the station to meet His Majesty.
Au revoir. [Exit.]

BALLIN

I noticed that in America. In fact, I . . .

PROFESSOR

You need not cross the Atlantic to see national jealousy. The whole English people, from the rabble in the streets to the most learned and cultivated class, are brazenly jealous of Germany.

BALLIN

I can't say I have noticed it among the English I have had to deal with in business. Big concerns can emulate each other without being jealous.

PROFESSOR

Yes, it is just like class diseases. The same thing works out in the high-liver as gout, in the underfed as rheumatism. Among your upper commercial classes you call it emulation — among us, the rabble, the commoner term for it is jealousy.

BALLIN

Oh! Professor — rabble!

[Laughs.]

PROFESSOR

Yes, we live with the rabble, among the rabble. . . .

BALLIN

And teach the rabble.

PROFESSOR

No doubt.

BALLIN

And if the rabble thinks wrongly, it is due to your wrong teaching.

PROFESSOR

I don't say no.

BALLIN

Then if this accursed war is due to a state of the public mind, the original cause is your teaching.

PROFESSOR

My dear wife 's English.

BALLIN

That accounts . . .

PROFESSOR

It accounts for nothing, except perhaps a better insight into English character and a greater appreciation of its defects. I do not like the English. They are superficial, supercilious, mentally slipshod.

BALLIN

Do you know, Professor, I have often thought we Germans suffer from too much brains.

PROFESSOR

Still, we are not psychologists, Ballin. Men of science never are. All the jokes regarding want of knowledge of human character are about men of science.

BALLIN (*laughing*)

And Herren Professors!

PROFESSOR

Yes, you are right. All the befooling stories are about absent-minded professors. But what I mean

is that the concentration of our attention on the physical side of life in education and in practice has atrophied our power to perceive the influence of human character in connexion with facts.

BALLIN

You mean . . .

PROFESSOR

I mean, for instance, that a man like Lichnowsky, though he is not a man of science but is the type of our intellectual product, is devoid of the faculty of presenting his facts with the subtleties that give them their value at any given moment.

BALLIN

I am sorry, Professor. I still don't see your point.

PROFESSOR

Well, I'll put it another way. Mathematics are pure reason. There is no human soul in mathematics at all. Two and two can never make anything but four. The fact is final. It is the same with the most intricate of calculations. Well, we Germans have a tendency to regard all facts more or less as mathematical expressions. Lichnowsky, for instance, reports a fact. He does n't realise that that fact is like a stone in the wilderness, that it is grown over with all kinds of moss and lichen, and that it is a swarming township of insects and microbes and what not. Like the specialist that he is, and we are taught to be, he wipes all this super-

growth off his fact to get it clean and clear. But that is just the thing he ought not to do. In the political and social life of peoples it is just the coincidence of these parasitical growths that determines action.

BALLIN

That's what you mean when you say we are not psychologists.

PROFESSOR

And that accounts for the errors and misjudgments of our diplomatists and politicians.

BALLIN

It is a delicate question, Professor, but I suppose you except His Majesty?

PROFESSOR

Yes, he is the genuine dilettante and, strange as it seems to our native *Kultur*, practically all the greatest progress of art and science has been due to dilettantes.

BALLIN

It is most interesting. Professor, you are the most interesting man I have ever met. No wonder the Kaiser loves you. (*Pause.*) Now, what do you think of English "Kultur"?

PROFESSOR

I should ask you that and, in fact, I should like to know.

BALLIN

God, I only wish we had more of it!

PROFESSOR

Is that your serious opinion? Yet it is frightfully unsympathetic. The English are not naturally a kind-hearted people.

BALLIN

That's where Germans go wrong. I have had a great deal to do with the English and have always found them the most honourable, most generous, and least gullible people in the world. I hate gullible people, Professor. In business they cause more mischief than thieves. They are such a temptation. . . .

PROFESSOR

Well done, Ballin! That's splendid! (*Laughing.*) Tempt you from the path of righteousness?

BALLIN (*a little testily*)

I am not speaking of myself. . . . I mean a temptation to the fools and knaves who take advantage of them. The English, my dear Professor, are only at the beginning of a great career. We have shot ahead of them for the time being, but, if you went to Canada, you would see things to astonish you. There is a country which is a continent in itself. In a hundred years it will be the centre of the British race. England may dwindle into insignificance alongside it, but what does that matter? It will

always remain the “home” of the Anglo-Saxon. They are the greatest people in the world. We are not a match for them yet, Professor.

PROFESSOR

Yet Rome was the greatest people in the world.

BALLIN

How long?

PROFESSOR

Some seven hundred years.

[*Laughing.*]

BALLIN

That’ll outlive you and me anyhow!

PROFESSOR

The English at any rate, meanwhile, have an advantage over us in their intellectual shortage. Development is more natural and easy when it is not complicated by brains.

BALLIN (*with a look of illumination*)

Is that why the English prefer to promote inferior men to their higher posts?

PROFESSOR

And we?

BALLIN

B...

PROFESSOR

No names, please.

BALLIN

Do you consider Levy clever?

PROFESSOR. }

I don't know him.

BALLIN

Odd, is n't it, to place the grandson of a Frankfort Jew in a post like that?

[*The PROFESSOR looks surprised.*

Oh! I have no illusions about the Jews. Besides, I am half Polish. Our name was originally Balinsky, just as Radolin's was Radolinsky.

PROFESSOR (*reflectively*)

It's curious what a number of clever men Poland has supplied to the Empire. (BALLIN *salutes.*) We ought to annex Poland as an intellectual investment.

BALLIN

Like the Baltic provinces to Russia. (PROFESSOR *salutes.*) We ought to annex them too.

PROFESSOR

I think we've caught the contagion, too, Ballin. The fact is we have been playing with the fire too long, and you can't play with the fire without risk. Germany has been goaded into the idea that all her neighbours are jealous of her and that they are all conspiring against her and are watching for the moment of her weakness to fall upon and destroy her. It is not true, but it was necessary as a factor

in constructive German policy. It was only by persuading the Germans that war against them by jealous neighbours was imminent that they could be roused to the necessary sacrifices. It has given us an army, a navy, and at the same time patriotism; and without patriotism a nation is without backbone. But it has created a vast national error. We have taught them to obey and to believe, and obediently they have believed what they had to be told, and now we have to pay for the deception practised on them.

Enter VON ETTING hurriedly.

VON ETTING

Gentlemen, I must ask you to retire into the next room. His Imperial Highness is coming up.

[*Exeunt BALLIN and the PROFESSOR.*]

Enter the CROWN PRINCE hurriedly.

CROWN PRINCE

What did His Majesty say?

VON ETTING

Gave no explanation.

CROWN PRINCE (*lighting a cigarette*)

I wonder if he has sent for the Chancellor.

[*VON ETTING lifts the receiver.*]

CROWN PRINCE (*stops him*)

No, don't ask. Any news of Uncle Henry?

VON ETTING

Yes, a telegram to His Majesty.

CROWN PRINCE

One of the peacemakers! I wonder he does n't become an Englishman like Battenberg. All that slobber at Kiel last month made me sick. It had to come, Etting, and if it does not come off now, God help us! Bethmann 's another of the peace gang. Jagow, Zimmerman, Stumm, all of 'em "Little Germans." I 'm glad I got Bernstorff packed off to Washington. He 's another.

VON ETTING

His wife 's English?

CROWN PRINCE

No, American; almost as bad. [Telephone ring.

VON ETTING

For Your Highness.

CROWN PRINCE (*at telephone*)

Hurry up. (*Listens.*) At the Castle. (*Lowers his voice.*) Can you hear me? (*Turning to VON ETTING.*) Would you mind leaving the room for a moment, Etting? So sorry. [Exit VON ETTING.

His Majesty changed his mind as usual on the way from Kiel. . . . I don 't like it either. Telegram from Uncle Henry. I don 't know what he advises. Nor Lichnowsky either. All dead against us at

the Wilhelmstrasse. Every hour counts now. Tschirschky? What! Berchtold weakening! Great God, I'm coming round at once!

[Snatches up his helmet and rushes out.

Hooting of car.

[Liveried attendant looks in from other door; stealthily goes to desk, and, facing the door, touches one of the buttons several times. Moves away. Ring.

Enter VON ETTING.

VON ETTING (*sharply*)

What do you want?

ATTENDANT

Heard a ring, Sir.

[Exit, VON ETTING staring suspiciously at him as he goes.

VON ETTING (*at telephone*)

Who's there? I don't know. Ask at the palace. I'm not the door-keeper.

[Puts down receiver angrily.

[Motor-horn, drum, noise of presenting arms.

[Voices approaching. Doors thrown open and

the KAISER enters, followed by the A. D. C.'s.

The KAISER shakes hands with VON ETTING.

KAISER

Where is the Chancellor?

VON ETTING

His Imperial Highness wishes to see Your Majesty first.

KAISER (*irritatedly*)

I want the Chancellor at once. Here, give me the telephone.

[VON ETTING *presses button and hands receiver*.

KAISER (*putting back receiver*)

(To FIRST A.D.C.) Tell the Crown Prince I will see him in a few minutes. [Exit A.D.C.

(To VON ETTING.) Ask the Chancellor in.

[Exit VON ETTING.

[Footsteps outside. Door half opened. The CROWN PRINCE puts his head in.

CROWN PRINCE

(May I come in?

KAISER

I am expecting the Chancellor.

CROWN PRINCE

Can't I see you first?

KAISER

No, my boy, you can't.

CROWN PRINCE (*at door still*)

Oh, here's mother!

[The CROWN PRINCE's head disappears.

Enter the KAISERIN.

[*The KAISER goes forward and kisses her hand.*

KAISERIN (*simpering*)

I can't bear this, Willie.

KAISER

What can't you bear?

KAISERIN

The boy is devoted to you.

KAISER

I am sorry. You must go. I hear the Chancellor's tread.

Enter VON ETTING and the CHANCELLOR. The KAISERIN gives faint salutation to the CHANCELLOR. The KAISER shakes hands gravely with him.

[*Exit the KAISERIN.*

Well, Bethmann, for first-class bungling you deserve the prize of honour.

CHANCELLOR

I admit it frankly, Sir.

KAISER

Well, that clears the ground a bit. How do things stand now?

CHANCELLOR

Telegram yesterday from Petersburg that Russia will mobilise on Austrian frontier, if Austrian troops move into Servia.

KAISER

What have you replied?

CHANCELLOR

That I trusted she would not, as I feared we could not regard war between Russia and Austria with indifference.

KAISER

Where is Jagow?

CHANCELLOR

In his room.

KAISER (*touching button and putting receiver to his ear*)

Is that you, Jagow? Bring all the correspondence here at once.

[*Puts receiver down. Pause during which the KAISER walks up and down in evident agitation.*

Do you realise what this damned thing means?

CHANCELLOR

Yes, it is terrible.

KAISER

Then why, man, have you let it come to this? What has that idiot Tschirschky been doing? (*The CHANCELLOR not answering.*) Don't you hear me? (*The CHANCELLOR looks at him steadily.*) God! you don't mean to say *he* has done this?

CHANCELLOR

He is not alone in it.

KAISER

I always distrusted that man.

CHANCELLOR

There are others, Majesty.

KAISER

A conspiracy. (*Laughs bitterly.*) A conspiracy — a conspiracy — say, man, the word, a conspiracy.

[*CHANCELLOR again says nothing, but again looks steadily at the KAISER.*

Leave me alone. Wait for me in Etting's room.

[*Exit the CHANCELLOR.*

[*Walks up and down the room muttering, "Blind idiot that I have been." Sits down to write something, tears up the paper. Ring at telephone; takes up receiver.*

No, I can't; not yet.

A.D.C.

Excellency von Jagow, Sir.

Enter VON JAGOW

KAISER

Have they mobilised yet?

VON JAGOW

No, Sir.

KAISER

Nothing new to-night?

VON JAGOW

Not at Foreign Office.

KAISER

Out with it, man, quick.

VON JAGOW

The War Office have moved forces to the frontiers.

KAISER

Well, that's right in case of danger.'

VON JAGOW

Yes, but it has excited the public.

KAISER

Do you mean you think my people want a war?

VON JAGOW

I think the Staff count on it.

KAISER

The conspiracy. Jagow, you are a sensible fellow. Tell me. Do you think my people want a war?

VON JAGOW

I think many of Your Majesty's subjects do.

KAISER

That's it. Germans have forgotten what war means. They have grown rich. Everybody is prosperous and happy. Germany is the best regulated community in the world. She is at the head of everything. She is sick of prosperity and wants misfortune for a change. Is that what you mean?

VON JAGOW

No, Sir. I do not think that. But I fear the public believes the whole world will go on its knees the moment Germany raises her voice.

KAISER

Well, let us see the despatches. (*Reads.*) Do you think Grey genuine?

VON JAGOW

I think so. Englishmen, however, are hardly ever themselves.

KAISER

Why, Jagow (*smiling*), that's rank philosophy. Explain!

VON JAGOW

I mean that an English Ambassador is always interpreting instructions of his chief, and his chief those of the Cabinet; and the Cabinet is always thinking of Parliament, and Parliament of the electors; and behind them all are a lot of irresponsible, clever, and some unscrupulous *intéressés*, who influence decisions.

KAISER

Very well reasoned, Jagow. That might apply to all the Ministers but Grey. The Foreign Office is quite independent of Parliament and does what it likes. I know Grey. He means well and can't want war. You look incredulous, Jagow! No diplomacy can want war.

VON JAGOW

Yes, obviously.

KAISER

The Chancellor's in Etting's room. I have several men to see. I'll see you together later. Send no more despatches for the present. I want a few hours' reflection. [Exit VON JAGOW.

Enter VON ETTING.

Show in the Professor.

Enter the PROFESSOR.

Have you been waiting long?

PROFESSOR

No, Sir, about an hour.

KAISER

They hate you, Professor. I shall have to en-
noble you. [Laughs.]

PROFESSOR

God forbid!

KAISER (*hurt*)

Why?

PROFESSOR

Your Majesty has done me enough honour by
having confidence in my sincerity. I wish to retain
Your Majesty's confidence by its disinterestedness.

KAISER

Quite right. No unworthy honours will be in-
flicted on you. Though I should like to have the
right to ask you to lunch with men instead of gov-
ernesses. (*Silence.*) You know war is imminent?

PROFESSOR

I knew.

KAISER (*in astonishment*)

You knew?

PROFESSOR

Yes, Sir. War has been coming for some time.
Your Majesty has the self-command not to see the
obvious.

KAISER

My God, Professor, I like you well! Call me names next. Call me a blasted idiot, call me a bloody fool (*getting angrier at every epithet*) — a vainglorious simpleton. No, Professor, don't call me that. Call me any damned thing you like and go to Hell yourself. [Purple with rage.]

[*The PROFESSOR rises, bows, and moves to the door.*]

Stop. (*The PROFESSOR stops.*) Here's my hand. You are the only friend I have. Sit down. I wish you could swear, Professor. It is what I have wanted all my life. Just a sensible, earnest adviser, just a sort of Socrates like you to . . .

PROFESSOR (*with a half-suppressed smile*)

Swear back?

KAISER

Yes, damn it, yes.

[*Walks nervously up and down. Hands the PROFESSOR a cigar-box. The PROFESSOR takes one, wrapped in silver paper.*]

What do you think of this business?

PROFESSOR

Insanity!

KAISER

With method in it!

PROFESSOR

None on our side.

KAISER

You mean we are mere tools — fools and tools.
[Laughs at his own joke.]

PROFESSOR (*very serious, with a slight trace of the supercilious*)

The only country which has nothing to gain by war is Germany.

KAISER

If we get Rotterdam and Riga out of it?

PROFESSOR

Dreams!

KAISER

How dreams! Do you mean we might be defeated?

PROFESSOR

No, Sir, I don't mean that we might not be ultimately successful. But history . . .

KAISER

Oh, history! (*Contemptuously.*) We make history.

PROFESSOR

The mightiest soldier can only kill his enemies. It takes mightier men than soldiers to make and preserve empires, and human character is the work of ages.

KAISER

“Great Cæsar fell”!

PROFESSOR

History (*the KAISER looks impatient*) has many instances of conquests, but the only conquests which have endured are those in which the union has been one which permitted the free play of individual character. France annexed Alsace and Russia Poland. Look at the difference. Spain could not hold Holland, and Holland could not hold Belgium. Why? Because the only bonds that can hold together peoples of different race or different historical evolution are either a common language, poetry, and literature, or a political web so delicate that it takes a microscope to perceive it, and so elastic that it distends with every breeze that blows.

KAISER (*wrapt in attention*)

Go on, give me instances.

PROFESSOR

The United States are an instance of the one, and British rule is an instance of the other.

KAISER

The United States!

PROFESSOR

Yes, Sir, the United States have imposed a common language on all immigrants as a political method.

KAISER

Well, but Alsace is German and the Dutch are Germans. You are wandering, Professor.

PROFESSOR

No, Sir (*testily*), I am not wandering. The Dutch are almost as little of the same race with the Germans of to-day as the Prussians are.

KAISER

My Prussians not Germans!

PROFESSOR

No, Sir, they are a race apart in Europe. The Dutch have grown apart. They have their own literature, their own history, their own political development, their own manners, and their own . . .

KAISER

Infernal pride.

PROFESSOR

Yes, Sir, their own infernal pride and love of independence. And as for Alsace, the Alsatians under the mild, elastic rule of the French developed their own way, and they too, like all peoples which are left to themselves, have developed pride and independence just like the Dutch. It takes centuries of discipline to overcome the spirit of independence when once it has eaten into the bones of a nation.

KAISER

You think we ought to have let Alsace, a German land, go on agitating for reunion to France.

PROFESSOR

No, Sir. Pardon my repeating. Soldiers are only good for killing their enemies, and we have tried to govern Alsace with soldiers and by brute force, instead of following better examples.

KAISER

Well, you don't think highly of the policy of annexing the Rhine Delta? But Rotterdam is a German port.

PROFESSOR

It is becoming German by evolution and history.

KAISER

Oh, history!

PROFESSOR

Yes, Sir. History is but evolution. Wars are mere passing explosions of anger which may arrest evolution temporarily but are incapable of promoting it. In antiquity . . .

KAISER

Oh, *antiquity* . . .

PROFESSOR

In antiquity all the men were killed off or sent into slavery. Children were slaughtered.

KAISER

By the by, Professor, have you seen that passage in Deuteronomy?

PROFESSOR

I know it, Sir; it only records what was customary in antiquity. Children were exterminated and the women became the concubines of the conquerors. Conquest then produced permanent results.

KAISER

You don't mean we can only get Rotterdam by killing off the Dutch?

PROFESSOR

No, Sir. I only say that would be the permanent alternative for peaceful evolution in this particular case. And then you would have to reckon with England.

KAISER

Oh, England bellows for a few days and then goes off to golf for the week-end. I am not very frightened of England.

PROFESSOR

With all deference for Your Majesty's view, and Your Majesty has more knowledge of English character . . .

KAISER

Half an Englishman myself. By the by, Professor, I count in English. Did you know that?

PROFESSOR

I did not know. Your Majesty's mother was a clever woman.

KAISER

She was, indeed, Professor. (*Walks over to a picture and looks at it.*) She was, indeed. And to think that she might still be living, if science had been a little faster in making its discoveries. I did not appreciate her. Everything she was blamed for advocating I have helped to get. In her I lost the one person I had to listen to. My dear wife admires me too much, Professor. I began by being her Prince Charming, and now I am her earthly Godhead. (*The PROFESSOR looks very respectful.*) No, Professor, I have had no Egeria.

Now Uncle Bertie had friends; I have had none. I mean intimate friends who forget you are their sovereign. That is the worst of Germany. Between ourselves, Professor, Germans have no self-restraint. If I made a friend of a German, he would act like Falstaff in no time. That's where Englishmen have an advantage over us. They never take liberties with each other, however intimate they may be. Even women in England take no liberties. Uncle Bertie, now. . . Well, never mind. Go on with your history, Professor. (*Touches telephone button.*) England will not move. She has her arms full of the Irish question.

PROFESSOR

Perhaps, Sir, she will only be too glad to have a diversion.

KAISER

I have thought of that too, though Lichnowsky reports that a foreign complication would precipitate a civil war. All the troops are in Ireland and can't be withdrawn. Well, you say Peace, Professor. I am going to see Ballin now. Come every day to see me. Good-bye.

[*Shakes hands.* *Exit the PROFESSOR.*
Enter VON ETTING.

I'll see Herr Ballin, now.

VON ETTING

Yes, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Enter BALLIN.

KAISER

Glad you were able to get through so quickly. All the lines blocked?

BALLIN

Yes, Sir, but I motored from Hamburg.

KAISER

Well done! (*A pause.*) This is bad business. What do you think of it?

BALLIN

It is not for one of Your Majesty's humbler subjects . . .

KAISER

Oh, damn humility, Ballin! Speak out, man.
By the by, have you lunched?

BALLIN

No, Sir.

KAISER

The brutes kept you waiting with an empty
stomach! (*Touches a button.*) I'll have something
brought for you.

Enter SECOND A.D.C.

Order something for Herr Ballin. He'll eat it
here. [*Exit* A.D.C.]

Ballin (*looking at him closely*), they are all mad.
[*A pause.*]

BALLIN

Who, Sir?

KAISER

Never mind. You look ten years older, Ballin.
(*A pause.*) Are we making a mistake?

BALLIN

Your Majesty knows my devotion to the cause
of Germany's prosperity.

KAISER (*impatiently*)

Yes, Ballin. Yes, Ballin.

BALLIN (*slowly*)

I am not competent in matters of higher policy.

[Doors thrown open. Flunkies bring in tray with food. Table pulled out from somewhere. Exeunt flunkies. BALLIN waits.]

KAISER

Eat, man, eat.

[BALLIN eats.]

You don't approve of war.

BALLIN

No, Sir.

KAISER

It will be over by Christmas. (*Silence.*) You don't think so.

BALLIN

No, Sir.

KAISER

Then, what the devil do you think?

[The KAISER gets up and walks up and down the room without waiting for an answer. Stops.]

Ballin, I want you to talk frankly. (*Offers him a cigar.*) Why do they all want war? [BALLIN rising.]

Keep your seat. No, take this one. (*Pointing to a large armchair and sitting down in another.*) So you think it's a mistake, do you? Why?

BALLIN

I may be wrong.

KAISER

Damn humility, Ballin. There's nobody listening. Now the stomach's at ease, talk.

BALLIN (*clearing his throat*)

War is subject to the laws of business, and in business the best-laid ventures can fail. But for Your Majesty the Hamburg-Amerika would not have outlived many a venture. But if Your Majesty's venture fails, where's the help to come from?

KAISER

Don't say my venture, Ballin. It is everybody's venture except mine. But go on, why do you think it will fail?

BALLIN

I only say it may fail. I don't think it will fail.

KAISER

Yes, you do, Ballin.

BALLIN

No, Sir. I only think the stake is too large.

KAISER

Our all.

BALLIN

Yes, it is an act of desperation — the thing a business man does when the only alternative is to blow his brains out.

KAISER

But they all want it.

BALLIN

Ignorance and want of imagination!

KAISER

That may apply to the mass of the population, but you can't call my advisers ignorant.

BALLIN

Nor is that my meaning. Ignorance and want of imagination account for the popularity of war.

KAISER

Tell me how it will affect Hamburg.

BALLIN

That will depend on who gets the mastery of the sea. If with our smaller . . .

KAISER

But superior . . .

BALLIN

. . . fleet we obtain the mastery, Hamburg will rise to a prosperity never before witnessed. If not, war will spell unqualified disaster for us.

KAISER

Oh, Ballin, Ballin, these are terrible times! Don't go away. Go and tell the Countess Emma I want

you to stay overnight. We'll take a walk in the park later. [BALLIN bows and exit.

Enter the CROWN PRINCE.

Well, my boy, what have you to say to all this?

CROWN PRINCE

I say there is no alternative. War is inevitable. The whole country is anxious for it and expects it. We can't afford to let it cool off. Ask anybody you like, father, you will find only one idea: War has to be. You don't suppose that Poincaré is in Petersburg merely to pay a call. He was sent for. France is simply Russia's lackey. Iswolsky rules the French Cabinet. He has only to threaten them with the Imperial displeasure and down they go on their knees.

KAISER

Yes, the French are a degenerate people.

CROWN PRINCE

They need a master like Napoleon.

KAISER

So do all peoples, my boy. But suppose England joins them?

CROWN PRINCE

That she will not do. She will only protest, and even that only mildly in her usual virtuous way, and make money out of the war by supplying us with all we want to crush her friends. She did that

in 1870. She has always thriven on the misfortune of others, and, when we have crushed France and Russia, we shall be able to conclude a naval alliance with her against America and Japan.

KAISER

My boy, you don't know England as I do. I feel like an Englishman and understand their feelings. I am afraid England will be dragged into war by hatred and fear of Germany.

CROWN PRINCE

I think not. She has enough on her hands in Ulster. Besides, the Consuls' reports are there. My dear father, if you were to read them instead of . . . trusting to your intuition — I don't believe in intuition — you would see that Ireland would be in flames the moment the troops were withdrawn. England dare not move. Lichnowsky reports . . .

[The KAISER looks angrily surprised.]

(Misunderstanding the KAISER's displeasure at his having had access to the Ambassador's despatches.) Yes, you may start, father. Lichnowsky reports that the guns may go off in Ireland at any moment. Carson is no mere actor, and every true Irishman only longs for the downfall of England, which means freedom for Ireland. England is a *quantité négligeable*.

KAISER

Have you thought that just the opposite of what you all expect might result, and that England may

come in to get rid of the Irish question? I know the Irish; when fighting is to be done the Irish fly to arms. The English may be mostly fools, insular, ignorant, and all that, but they have just the intuition you despise. A common enemy, my boy, will make a united nation of the United Kingdom.

CROWN PRINCE

I know the English people of to-day better than you do, father. You know those of yesterday, I know the English of to-day, the typical English who govern India, for instance. I have hunted with them, caroused with them, and a better sort I don't know. If I had my choice, I would rather have Englishmen than any other kind of men for my companions. With them I feel more comfortable (*gemüthlich*) than with Germans. With Germans I can't be familiar as I can with Englishmen. Germans get so easily boisterous (*ausgelassen*). Individually I like the English, but they and the Irish have a racial antipathy for each other. Ireland is their Alsace and Poland combined, and it is now or never for Ulster, just as it is now or never for Home Rule. Lichnowsky is quite confident that civil war is inevitable.

KAISER

Suppose he is right; have you thought that a war between the Great Western Powers at the present day can only be a life or death struggle, that we shall have to fling all considerations of humanity, justice, even treaty obligations, to the winds in a

gigantic effort to annihilate the enemy, that such war is not a mere duel, but a death grapple in which, just as teeth and nails are used between individuals, what is equivalent to them is used between nations; have you thought what this may mean for Germany?

CROWN PRINCE

Yes, I have weighed all that.

KAISER

Even if we win, have you thought of the countless families plunged into mourning, of the hatred we shall stir up throughout the world, of the curses of whole nations? Have you thought that a mere hitch, the unforeseen of strategy and battle, may foil our hopes, that we may find ourselves a year, two years, three years hence, still struggling against increasing odds? Have you considered the possibility of our ultimate failure?

CROWN PRINCE

Yes, I have weighed all that.

KAISER

Have you thought of Germany invaded by the Cossack, our cities bombarded, our unoffending citizens shot down in cold blood on any pretext that is handy, our villages and towns sacked and burnt, our women and children massacred by drunken fiends?

CROWN PRINCE

I have weighed it all. We can only win, father. The French are quite unprepared. Everybody knows that. We shall reach Paris before the Russians have finished their mobilisation, and we can confidently leave England out altogether. Whatever you decide, don't you think, father, I ought to be consulted as future sovereign?

KAISER (*musing — pause — stands up and puts his hand on his son's shoulder*)

Bear this in mind, my boy, that if I win I shall go down to posterity with a character as black as that of Attila. If I lose, you will never reign.

CROWN PRINCE

We can't lose. [Exit the KAISER.

Enter VON ETTING.

It's all right, I think.

VON ETTING

I hope the fleet's safe.

CROWN PRINCE

It left Norwegian waters yesterday. It won't be in safety till to-morrow. By Jove! I know what I should have done, had I had command at the British Admiralty. I should have sent a squadron to cruise off the Skaggerack.

VON ETTING

Would not that draw war?

CROWN PRINCE

Not necessarily. I don't think Tirpitz would have let them come out of the fyords.

VON ETTING

That is just what His Majesty would have liked. That England does not do anything so simple shows she wants war.

CROWN PRINCE

I say let her have it. *Vive la guerre!* Ta! Ta!

[Exit.]

[VON ETTING busy at the desk, putting things in order.

CURTAIN

SCENE II

Same decor, but at night. About thirty-six hours have elapsed.

Steps in darkness. A.D.C. turns on light. *The KAISER's study revealed.* A pause. VON ETTING comes hurriedly in with despatch-box. Tries quills. Picks out of wastepaper basket the torn-off date of calendar and replaces it. *It is July 28.* Looks nervous and angry. Pause. Doors thrown open and the KAISER enters rather boisterously. *Exit A.D.C.*

KAISER

Take down a telegram. (*Walks up and down hurriedly.*) Great God in heaven! War — war! I don't want war. Great God in heaven! Great God in

heaven! (*Pause.*) To His Imperial Majesty the Czar Nicholas.

VON ETTING

Your Majesty has not forgotten that Your Majesty has given orders that nothing was to be done till after the Naval Council meeting to-morrow morning, when the Crown Prince will be back. I hope Your Majesty will forgive my reminding him of his orders.

KAISER

Quite right, Etting, but I know what I am about. I may get a reply by to-morrow morning and stop the whole cursed thing. Even if we have little chance of success, we must make the effort. Write:—

“Heard with anxiety,” better “with great anxiety,” “impression caused by Austro-Hungarian action against Serbia.” — Stop. — “Unscrupulous agitation going on for years in Serbia led to revolting crime against Archduke Franz Ferdinand.”

No, that won’t do — he was only the victim. Say “of which the Archduke was the victim.” He was a nice fellow, Franz Ferdinand, Etting. Quite different from what one would suppose. I could n’t realise it when I heard it. I was spinning across Kiel Harbour when the news came — in the middle of the race. I shoved the despatch into my pocket and forgot all about it till close on dinner-

time, and then I suddenly realised the horror of it — those two fine human beings — he, an honest, straightforward man who would have been a true friend of his people and of mine, and she, as sweet a woman as ever trod this earth. It was a devilish thing to do, Etting, — a hellish thing, Etting. Those Serbians have won all they have by assassination, and assassins they remain, one and all. I don't wonder at Franz Josef being infuriate against them. Yet under a strong government they might be all the better citizens. Still, what a brutal thing the assassination of their King was! I'll refer to that.

[*Dictating*.]

“The spirit which made the Serbians murder their own King . . . and his consort still dominates that country.”

That will appeal to Nicholas. Who was it who said the Russian constitution was a “despotism tempered by assassination”? For Slavs it does n't matter what the form of government is. They would assassinate Nicholas just the same, though he has given them their Duma. Just the same (*drawing out words*). [Dictating.]

“Doubtless you will agree with me that both of us . . .”

Why us alone? It applies to sovereigns generally. [Dictating.]

“And all other sovereigns . . . (*claiming*) have a common interest to insist that those

who are responsible for this horrible murder shall suffer their deserved punishment."

I had better say something about Russian sympathy with the Serbians. [Dictating.

"On the other hand, I do not undervalue" . . . no, say "Overlook": "Undervalue" is better: "the difficulty you may have in resisting the clamour." No, that won't do. "In stemming the tide"—well, you'll adjust that—"of—of—of race affinity"! No, that won't do. That seems to . . . — no, say "public opinion" . . . I suppose there is none in Russia. That'll flatter Sazonoff. I must say something about our friendship.

"In view of our cordial and long-standing friendship, I will use all my influence to induce Franz Josef"—no, that won't do. It is that animal Tisza who has engineered all this mess. No, say "Austria-Hungary. . . to obtain a frank . . . and . . . satisfactory" . . . it must be satisfactory to me . . . "understanding with Russia." That will do. No, wait a moment. Say: "I hope confidently that you will support me in my efforts to overcome all difficulties . . . all difficulties . . ." Add "which may arise."

"Your most sincere and devoted friend and cousin."

Sign it "Willie."

Now, get that off as fast as you can. It is half-past ten. He can read it to-night still. We may

have an answer before breakfast. Fly, man. (VON ETTING *disappearing into adjoining room.*) Etting! (VON ETTING *turns round.*) You understand: I don't want it ciphered. I don't mind indiscretions.

[*Pause.*]

VON ETTING *returns, packs papers into despatch-case, locks it, and carries it away, turning the light down to a single lamp, on which*

CURTAIN

ACT III

JULY 31

At Berlin. The KAISER's study — very like that at Potsdam. The two A.D.C.'s.

FIRST A.D.C.

It's all right. No escape this time. We shall go straight for Paris.

SECOND A.D.C.

It's funny, all the same. Little Willie's done it — smart boy. Made his father sit up. The old chap¹ was keen on peace, but the young 'un,² Fatty,³ and Longshanks⁴ made him understand. I believe the new 42⁵ was the strongest argument.

FIRST A.D.C.

I know nothing about artillery. Is it a Ganz⁶ or a Krupp?

SECOND A.D.C.

Both, I understand, but its very existence is a secret, so take care.⁷ Germany's filled with English spies. That governess to the young 'un's kiddies

¹ *Der alte.*

² *Der kleine.*

³ Nickname for Chief of the Staff, von Moltke.

⁴ Nickname for Admiral von Tirpitz.

⁵ The new siege-gun which demolished the fortifications of Liège and Antwerp.

⁶ Austrian.

⁷ *Achtung.*

is a spy. All these English governesses are spies. They are subsidised by the English Government. That's why we get 'em so cheap. They are just like Russian women, pry into everything. Born spies both. German women are no good for anything but dollars.

FIRST A.D.C.

Shut up!

SECOND A.D.C.

I know: delicate subject — all right, old chap. Beg your pardon. Too serious now. Look out.

[Steps heard.]

Enter VON ETTING (placing despatch-box on desk, trying quill, etc.)

VON ETTING

You need not wait. His Majesty is preparing a speech to his people (*slightly ironical in tone*). He'll deliver it from the balcony in a few minutes.

[A.D.C.'s hurry out.]

[VON ETTING throwing open the windows and doors. Noise of crowd and cheers heard from distance.]

Enter the KAISER.

KAISER

It's splendid, Etting. Splendid. The hour of my life: to hear my people's voice thunder out its love for their Kaiser. *Vox populi, vox Dei.* How true!

The KAISERIN enters and the sovereigns embrace.
[Distant cheers.]

KAISERIN (*sobbing*)

It's terrible and yet so beautiful. I have just seen. The whole Platz and streets are one mass of heads, all uncovered as if in God's house. [Ring.]

VON ETTING (*taking up receiver. Mumbling*)
Good God!

KAISER

What is it, Etting?

VON ETTING
Will Your Majesty take the receiver?

KAISER

Secret! (*Taking receiver.*) Has it gone? Two hours ago! Where are you? Come at once. (*Puts down receiver.*) All right, Etting.

[Exit VON ETTING.]

KAISERIN

What is it, dear?

KAISER

I'll tell you afterwards. I have learnt my speech. It's quite short. I'll say it off to you.

[Distant noise of crowd.]

[Declaiming.]

“A fateful hour has fallen upon Germany.

Envious peoples on all sides are driving us to self-defense.

“The sword has been forced into our hands. If my efforts at the last hour are not successful in bringing our opponents to see aright and in maintaining peace, with God’s help the sword shall not be restored to its scabbard without honour.

“War will demand of us enormous sacrifices of blood and treasure (*Gut und Blut*), but we shall show our enemies what it means to attack Germany.

“And now I commend you to God. Go to your churches, and on your knees before the Almighty pray for His help for our gallant army.”

KAISERIN

It’s beautiful, William, beautiful!

[*Exit the KAISER, then the KAISERIN.*

[*Frantic cheering heard in the distance. The KAISER’s voice heard from moment to moment.*

Enter the CHANCELLOR, walks nervously up and down. [Pause.]

Enter the KAISER, looking pale and anxious. Shakes hands with the CHANCELLOR.

KAISER

Too late, Bethmann.

CHANCELLOR

Surely not, Your Majesty.

KAISER

Too late, Bethmann. Austria has no right to yield without my consent. Too late, too late, too *late!* (*Thumping his desk.*) Oh, the cursed thing. It's all out of hand, Bethmann. You are a pack of fools, Bethmann. Nicholas has shamefully deceived me. Tschirschky and the whole gang have deceived me. Berchtold is an ass. It's too late, Bethmann, to talk of peace now. Did you see those crowds? Do you suppose we can draw back after we have picked up the glove in the face of the whole world? God knows, I tried my best to avoid war, and if I had done my duty to my country and the world I should have had every one of the gang shot. But now, it is too late, too late, too late!

[*Sits and holds his right hand over his eyes.*

I wanted peace, Bethmann. Now, I want war. The lion in me is roused. When I heard those shouts of triumph I knew they were the shouts of the nation behind them, the shouts of those fifty thousand cheering Germans! The voice of the nation — the cry of the nation to their leader. There's no longer an open question, Bethmann. The die was cast when those crowds cheered. It's the Divine will spoken through the tongue of the humble. I must obey that will — the will of God which tells me that this nation is destined to rule the earth. Its armies are the hosts of the chosen people of God. Like the hosts at Leipzig, they will sweep back the hordes of Germany's enemies. They will assert her right to the first place in the world. She has earned it. She shall have it, and now, Bethmann, I de-

cree a state of war.¹ Give those Russian dogs twelve hours to demobilise. Leave them no alternative, nor Pourtalès² either. Lose not an instant. Call the Council together. Tell Tirpitz and Moltke. Put on the gag of war. Let loose its hounds. God Almighty, why did I hesitate? I see now it is the voice of Providence, the hand of God. My head is too hot, Bethmann. I must go out.

[*Exit rather wildly.*

[*BETHMANN stands irresolute. The PROFESSOR and BALLIN enter from side door.*

BALLIN

His Majesty sent for us. He seems to have forgotten.

CHANCELLOR

I never saw him in such a state. It's war.

BALLIN

Good Lord, deliver us! War with France and England, as well as Russia, perhaps also Italy and Japan. It's sheer madness!

CHANCELLOR

I am afraid it is.

BALLIN

Can nothing be done?

CHANCELLOR

His Majesty will listen to nothing. I wanted to tell him about England.

¹ *Kriegsgefahrzustand.* ² German Ambassador at Petrograd.

PROFESSOR

England will surely not join our enemies?

CHANCELLOR (*uneasily*)

Indeed she will.

PROFESSOR

England has never acted except according to her interest. She will fight us, if we do anything she thinks detrimental to her naval or colonial supremacy. Not otherwise. It will be a mistake to touch Belgium, because Belgian independence is a factor in her historic and traditional policy.

CHANCELLOR

But if we can't get at France except through Belgium?

PROFESSOR

Then you will be right to count England among our enemies.

BALLIN

It's suicide.

CHANCELLOR

Too late, as His Majesty says.

PROFESSOR

Che sara' sara'. It will be a long job.

[Exit the CHANCELLOR.

BALLIN

But it's so idiotic!

PROFESSOR

My dear man, you and I know that. But there's something wrong with the world in general. It's got out of hand. Our leaders have not grown to the size necessary for the management of enterprises so gigantic.

BALLIN

And what about our army leaders?

PROFESSOR

Probably the same. Poor old world!

BALLIN

Poor old Germany! She has had a good time, Professor. We may never have another as good. The madmen have won (*gesiegt*).

PROFESSOR

There has always been a strange fascination about persons suffering from certain forms of insanity.

BALLIN

And epileptics!

PROFESSOR

Yes, they have always had some charm about them. I suppose Nietzsche was one. At any rate, he looked as if he had been one.

BALLIN

His extravagance, too!

PROFESSOR

Well, just that extravagance has a fascination. In antiquity, madmen in that sense, just on the borderline of genius, were worshipped.

BALLIN

This afternoon's scene!

PROFESSOR

Yes.

BALLIN (*offering him a cigar*)

Poor old Kaiser! These are the kind I imported for him. I have only a few left. They'll be the last for some time.

[*Light their cigars in silence and go out.*

Enter VON ETTING.

VON ETTING

At any rate, we shall see no more of these damned civilians for a time.

[*Packing papers together in despatch-box in a great hurry.*

CURTAIN

PART II
MISSING LINKS
(*BERLIN, MAY 5-23, 1915*)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PART II

THE KAISER.

THE KAISERIN.

THE CROWN PRINCE.

DR. VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, *the Imperial Chancellor.*

GRAND ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ, *Minister for the Navy.*

PRINCE VON BÜLOW, *Ambassador to Italy.*

HERR VON JAGOW, *Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI.

HERR BALLIN, *General Manager of the Hamburg-Amerika Steamship Company.*

DR. VON HELFFERICH, *Minister of Finance.*

HERR VON GWINNER, *Manager of the Deutsche-Bank.*

HERR POSSEHL, *leading Lübeck merchant.*

HERR VON ETTING, *Private Secretary to the KAISER.*

THE PROFESSOR.

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN.

AMERICAN WRITER.

GRÄFIN EMMA, *lady-in-waiting.*

FRAU PROFESSORINN (*born in England*).

HER DAUGHTER.

OLD MAN.

MAID.

PART II

MISSING LINKS

ACT I

MAY 5, 1915

At the PROFESSOR's home. Drawing-room. Books in abundance. Engraving of FIELD MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG on wall. Englishwoman's taste obvious. Daughter with spectacles dressed as Red-Cross nurse, looking at illustrated papers.

Enter FRAU PROFESSORINN.

FRAU PROFESSORINN

Why do you look so angry, dear?

DAUGHTER

I think there's plenty of reason to look angry. But I'd much rather not speak of the war at all, mother, while I am at home, seeing that we can't possibly agree. You are English at heart, I am German. And, however much I love you, mother, English though you be, I hate England and the English and everything English.

FRAU PROFESSORINN (*taking up an unfinished soldier's sock and knitting*)

It is such an ugly thing, hatred. You don't wish

to punish the innocent with the guilty, do you, darling?

DAUGHTER

They are all guilty.

FRAU PROFESSORINN

Guilty of what?

DAUGHTER

Of this whole war. And now they are urging Italy, bringing her to join them. Look at this.

[Holding her mother a paper.

FRAU PROFESSORINN (*reading*)

But that is only what the newspaper says. How do you know it is true?

DAUGHTER

It is obviously true—Oh, mother! (*Impatiently.*) I hate this war— What a time they are at dinner! Oh! Here they are. [Door opens.

Enter VON TIRPITZ, VON HELFFERICH, VON GWINNER, POSSEHL, the PROFESSOR, and several lay figures. Only VON TIRPITZ in uniform, otherwise evening dress. Shaking hands in turn with mother and daughter. Coffee, cigars. Guests falling into groups. Ladies serving.

PROFESSOR

But you have only the alternatives of government by majority or government by an oligarchical minority or an autocracy.

VON TIRPITZ

Pardon my temerity, Professor, in venturing to differ from so great an authority as you, but I think there is a fourth. [The PROFESSOR surprised.

There is a mixture of all three, as in England.

PROFESSOR

But it did n't work, Admiral. That was one of the causes of England's slow progress compared with the progress of Germany and the United States. Since she made the Lords subordinate to the Commons she has been able to cover much of the ground lost. In the case of Germany progress has been due to a benevolent autocracy, an efficient bureaucracy, and a docile, highly educated though intellectually starved majority.

VON TIRPITZ (*surprised*)

Highly educated and intellectually starved!

PROFESSOR

Yes, we have been overeducated, and overeducation is like overfeeding. Both produce forms of starvation. [VON TIRPITZ surprised.

Yes, overfeeding a physical organism has the same effect physiologically as overworking it. It starves from exhaustion of the power to assimilate. You statesmen ought to... [Bell rings.

That will be Ballin or Bülow. Poor Ballin's physical organism generally has to starve when the Kaiser sends for him.

BALLIN (*walking in hastily*)

So sorry. His Majesty kept me. When I managed to mention I was coming to you, he sent me off.

PROFESSOR (*emphatically*)

Have you fed?

BALLIN

Please don't trouble. I always take a sandwich with me to Imperial audiences. Well, Professor, what do you think of the English now?

PROFESSOR

I am aghast at the skill with which they get the whole world into line against us.

BALLIN

Get them into line? It's because they have beaten us.

PROFESSOR

How have they beaten us?

BALLIN

Do you mean to say, my dear Professor, that you join in the self-satisfied chorus of our victories? Why, we are merely racing for a place now. When England captured the sea, the race was won.

VON TIRPITZ

But, has she captured the sea? Our navy is intact.

BALLIN

Yes, our only hope was a smashing blow at the English naval power. We did not risk it and it is now too late. The odds have grown and are growing against us. Too late! Surely, Admiral, you don't think you have shaken British supremacy at sea?

VON TIRPITZ

Everything has gone wrong in this accursed war.
[*Moving away.*]

BALLIN

That comes of wanting to be too clever. And if we don't hurry up, it will be too late for peace as well. Between ourselves, Professor, all we have won has been due to cheating. Our idiotic diplomacy, which could not see farther than the length of its own nose, has not only misled us as to probabilities, but, with its deplorable want of tact and understanding for human character, has given itself away or been found out, the sin of sins in practical life.

PROFESSOR

But does not that apply to all diplomacy? Look at all these official apologies for its breakdown, every one blaming the other like a pack of chamber-maids over a broken slop-pail.

BALLIN

Worse! How could Bernstorff and Dernburg think they could work American public opinion as if Americans were well-drilled Germans?

PROFESSOR

How true, Ballin! We are hopeless.

BALLIN

That wily old fox Asquith saw our mistake at once and stopped Kipling and Hall Caine from going over to counter-agitate. He knew the Anglo-Saxon character. To try and drill it into any opinion produces just the opposite effect. The only result of the pro-German agitation in America has been to increase the irritation against Germany. The English have been cleverer. They have held their tongues and let facts speak for themselves.

PROFESSOR

By the by, you were rough on poor Tirpitz. What do you think of his strategy?

BALLIN

Too prudent at first and too brutal afterwards. He has not come up to my expectation. Of course he may be accumulating for a final spring, but I am afraid it is too late.

PROFESSOR

And the submarines?

BALLIN

In theory all right, in practice degrading. Our marine officers feel the humiliation deeply.

[*Glancing towards VON TIRPITZ.*

Poor Tirpitz! He looks awfully crestfallen. He must feel it.

PROFESSOR

How humiliation?

BALLIN

In the Navy, Professor, there is a lofty spirit of gallantry and humanity. It is not so inherent to the naval profession as such as to the mariner as such. All our seamen in the mercantile service feel it. There is not a man on my liners who would not risk his life to save life. You understand what I mean now?

PROFESSOR

Yes! But why?

BALLIN

In the sea, they all have a common friend whom they love and a common foe whom they dread. They love and dread the vast, unending, mysterious ocean, the waves which can turn from one hour to another from caressing tenderness and fascinating smiles to scowls and lashing fury . . .

PROFESSOR

Like a beautiful and spoilt woman. I did not know you as a poet, Ballin. [Laughing.]

BALLIN

Yes, every sailor is a poet. Contact with the ocean, its glories and dangers, soon makes you one. The sailor's business is to preserve and save life. To destroy it is as foreign to his nature as it is to

that of a St. Bernard dog. I feel it myself. I loathe and despise this destruction of life and even of property. To capture property and appropriate it does not diminish the world's stock, and leaves it still available for business exchanges. To destroy is the work of the unconscious brute.

PROFESSOR

But war changes human character.

Enter the AMERICAN WRITER and the PATRIOTIC CITIZEN.

AMERICAN WRITER (*shaking hands with the PROFESSOR*)

I am mighty glad to see you, Sir, and to meet your distinguished company. [Presentations.

(To HERR VON HELFFERICH.) I hope, Sir, you have interesting news from the front.

VON HELFFERICH (*abruptly*)

None at all.

[*The AMERICAN WRITER attacks others in the background. Group of the PROFESSOR, BALLIN, VON HELFFERICH, and VON TIRPITZ in deep conference seated on couch and chairs at other extremity.*

PROFESSOR

What is the use of telling the public lies?

VON HELFFERICH

Use! Why, lying has been turned into a weapon.

PROFESSOR

Not only by us, Helfferich.

VON HELFFERICH

I mean by all the belligerents. I get all the *communiqués* and have them pasted alongside each other on large sheets of paper. You might transpose them without changing anything essential. All boasting of the same gains, all retaking trenches lost, and so on. There is only one fact that stands out and can't be denied even by the cleverest of the official liars; it is that the war has reached a deadlock.

PROFESSOR

But you'll not get the German people to understand that.

VON HELFFERICH

That just shows the danger of official lying in a country like Germany where people have been disciplined into believing everything they are told.

PROFESSOR

Don't you think people believe what they want to believe?

VON HELFFERICH

Maybe. But you can't get away from a patent fact.

PROFESSOR

And a patent fact is that we are in possession of enemy territory, and, without suppressing the truth, it is difficult to make people understand that's not necessarily victory. Thank God, anyhow, we are not in the same position as the French. Suppose the French had been able to overrun Westphalia and had possession of Cologne, Düsseldorf, Elberfeld, Essen, etc., the whole of our chief manufacturing area, I wonder if we should have been as able as they to keep afloat?

The French used not to have the faculty of meeting misfortune with good humour. But a great change has come over them since 1871. Besides, the presence alongside them of the English has been like a cord along a precipice. It has steadied their footsteps, though it would not have saved them had they slipped.

BALLIN

We have all along underrated England. Even her army of amateurs will beat ours in the long run. (*General surprise.*) Because it is an army of volunteers who have gone in to win, just as they go into a football match to win, and, when all Europe is exhausted, they will still be pouring in thousands of men from all their empire — perhaps America included. I know the Anglo-Saxon. England is the common home, and rather than see a German army in England, fifty-odd millions of Americans would force the United States to join England.

PROFESSOR

Don't you think the Americans are divided?

BALLIN

Not the Eastern States, where the safety of English cathedrals and Oxford and Cambridge and Westminster Abbey and Stratford-on-Avon are concerned. England is always the home of the Anglo-Saxons, wherever they be. They may have family squabbles, but Old England belongs as much to them as to the resident English. Besides, nobody is taken in but ourselves over the causes of the war. We began it badly, and I can tell you, from a long experience of business, that any business which begins badly goes on badly and ends badly and that is what is going to happen in this business. The only thing to be done in such cases is to stop and wind it up as fast as possible.

PROFESSOR

It is very difficult to stop. We must have something to show for all this expenditure of life and treasure.

BALLIN

Well, we have beaten the Russians on land, if the others have beaten us at sea.

[VON TIRPITZ moves off to speak with the
FRAU PROFESSORINN.

PROFESSOR

Poor Tirpitz! You never leave him the chance of an illusion!

BALLIN

I don't want to. He ought to go. His submarine feats do more harm than good. Besides (*violently*), though we are on French soil, it is only because we misled and surprised the enemy. We have exhausted our advantage, and when an aggressor fails in his object, he is beaten. Every day we keep the war going on the Western Front makes things worse for us.

PROFESSOR

You had better not say this, my dear man, openly. You would be lynched as a Pro-Englisher.

BALLIN

I don't think so. In Berlin, where half the population is degenerate, maybe, but not in Hamburg or Bremen or Lübeck, where the war is unpopular and people are sick of it. Besides, they all think we are in the wrong and feel humiliated at the brutal and tactless way in which these stupid generals have conducted the war.

PROFESSOR

That's our misfortune. What can you expect of a lot of half-educated aristocrats who regard the lives of ordinary men with less consideration than they do their cattle? So the Hamburgers are "Pro-Englishers"?

BALLIN

Everybody in Berlin seems to be regarded as a Pro-Englisher, if for a moment he doubts that we

are going to sign the treaty of peace in Buckingham Palace.

PROFESSOR

Are we fools, Ballin?

BALLIN

Fools! Call us lunatics!

[POSSEHL, who had moved off and has been sitting with the FRAU PROFESSORINN and the PATRIOTIC CITIZEN, moves forward.

POSSEHL

Who is that windbag?

PROFESSOR

He is recruiting for the Anti-English League, of which he is the founder, and represents the average German fool. I thought Bülow would like to see the creature. He reflects the majority here in Berlin — the God-punish-England type. What do you say to my description of him, Herr Possehl?

POSSEHL

He does not exist in the Hanse towns and I can only speak of them with knowledge. We rather suspect violent patriots there.

VON GWINNER

Suspect them of what?

POSSEHL

In business, you see, very emphatic opinions are like advertisements. The wise turn their noses away; only fools swallow 'em.

VON HELFFERICH

The Professor 's right. It is no use arguing with fools or rogues. If they are fools, they don't understand you and if rogues they won't. You are speaking of that patriotic League. Half these things are created for the benefit of the founders — shady financiers and bedraggled women who have reputations to recover, or people who are trying to rise on the back of charity or patriotism to a higher rank in society and so on.

POSSEHL

But where do they find their recruits?

VON HELFFERICH

Oh! among the stupid and ignorant. It is amazing how the war has brought fools—downright, unredeemed fools — to the fore.

POSSEHL

A man told me yesterday that he was proud he did not speak a word of English, had never spoken with an Englishman in his life, had never been to England, and so on.

PROFESSOR

Don't worry about that, dear Herr Possehl. It is almost a University maxim that the pride of

knowledge is inaccessible to reason, but what is the pride of knowledge to the pride of ignorance!

[Door opens.

Enter PRINCE VON BÜLOW — handshaking.

PROFESSOR

Welcome, Highness.

[VON TIRPITZ, VON HELFFERICH, and VON BÜLOW moving to the front.

VON TIRPITZ

Well, what about Italy?

VON BÜLOW

Bad — don't ask me questions. I shall only see His Majesty to-morrow. He sent for me to report.

VON HELFFERICH

I know. (Pause.) I have just been reading the Italian denunciation of the Alliance again. What Machiavellianism!

VON BÜLOW

Could you expect anything else from Italians? They have never ceased to be *cinquecento*.

PROFESSOR

Machiavelli, it is true, only expressed the views of his environment.

VON BÜLOW

Well, his environment was one of astute and unscrupulous egotism; such as they were then, the Italians have remained.

VON TIRPITZ

I have never read Machiavelli.

VON BÜLOW

More's the pity. He wrote "The Prince" ostensibly as a spelling-book for territorial pirates. (*Smiling at VON TIRPITZ.*) It professed to be a sort of up-to-date staff manual, showing how autocrats had to operate to keep possession of the vessel of state and order among the crew.

[VON TIRPITZ *bewildered.*]

PROFESSOR

My dear Tirpitz — you'll have to read it.

VON HELFFERICH (*amused at VON BÜLOW's chaff*)

True, *mon prince*, they remain Machiavellian, but we had taken a leaf out of the same book before the Italians denounced the Alliance.

VON BÜLOW

You mean in tearing up the "scrap of paper"?

VON HELFFERICH

Of course.

VON BÜLOW

Maybe. And now we have n't even the comfort of a good conscience when we express righteous indignation about the Italian defection.

PROFESSOR

All that only shows the moral inferiority of the Collective to the Individual mind.

[VON BÜLOW *retires to speak to the FRAU PROFESSORINN.*

[*The PATRIOTIC CITIZEN and the AMERICAN WRITER, who have been entertaining the FRAU PROFESSORINN, come forward.*

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN

Everybody is a Pro-Englander who has a friendly word to say for those brutes. They are beyond the pale of civilisation. And we treat their wounded as we do our own. It's shameful.

AMERICAN WRITER

But have you evidence of the allegations against the English?

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN

Evidence! I should think we have. Have you not read the reports?

AMERICAN WRITER

What reports?

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN

Why, the official reports, of course!

AMERICAN WRITER

I never believe official reports.

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN (*indignantly*)
You don't suppose they are concocted?

AMERICAN WRITER
I believe the wish is father to the thought.

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN (*turning to HELFFERICH*)
Your eyes must be opened by this time and you
must be thankful you did n't get your *entente* with
England?

VON HELFFERICH
Why?

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN
If you had, she would have swallowed us up.

VON HELFFERICH
I don't understand.

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN
Do you mean to say you would have trusted that
treacherous. . . . No, I can't stand you lukewarm
fellows. We've got to root them out, — the sneaky
hypocrites, making piles of money out of German
brains and sitting on the corn in the manger and
barking, when any horse hungry from his day's work
for their benefit comes near.

VON HELFFERICH (*nodding in direction of PRINCE
VON BÜLOW*)

Have you read the Prince's book?

PATRIOTIC CITIZEN

No, Sir. And I don't want to. It's probably some milk-and-water apology for England. It's a disgrace to have such a man in office — an avowed friend of England and all that gang of assassins — and married to an Italian. That's enough for me. He ought to be in a concentration camp. I can hardly restrain myself from telling him so to his face. The English make no bones about these things. They soon chucked out everybody who even knew the German language. We ought to do the same.

[VON HELFFERICH moves away.]

VON HELFFERICH (*to the Professor*)

My dear fellow — I can't, I really can't — I can't stand that man. You must try somebody else on him. Do you mean to say that is the spirit of the Berlin cockney?

PROFESSOR

That's so. So beware of it. It's murderous.

VON HELFFERICH

Are you sure he's all right in his mind?

PROFESSOR

His mind's like that of the majority. It's all right in peace-time.

VON HELFFERICH

I always suspect violent Anglophobes. He's all right, no doubt (*laughing*). Battles, however,

are not won by hard words, but by hard blows, and nothing marks the coward so conclusively as hatred.

PROFESSOR

I agree with you, hatred is the sign of fear. It is the unreasoning instinct of the weaker in the presence of the stronger. No brave man can hate.

BALLIN

If anything could prove to me that the English are more than a match for us, it is that those who are responsible for the war have started that idiotic cry, "God punish England," and the "Anti-English League." They know the war is becoming unpopular and think with such rubbish to stiffen the national backbone.

VON BÜLOW

You were saying that the English are more than a match for us.

BALLIN

I must say, all the same, that the English have shown a wonderful lack of inventive genius in the present war. That's because of their disbelief in themselves. It works out in their thinking every Englishman equally unfit for everything, and now that they have no German experts to fall back upon, they resort to their old silly method of appointing commissions to disguise their individual incompetency.

PROFESSOR

Well, they may thank Heaven we have other things that are worse.

BALLIN

It is not the English, my dear Professor, that I really criticise, it is the governing class and their satellites, who have got hold of the handle of the machine — all tenacious because second-rate, and because second-rate, jealous.

PROFESSOR

Oh! yes, jealousy, the demon! Fighting is n't confined to international jealousies.

BALLIN

Yes, a domestic jealousy you may never have dreamt of has cost us this war. The artillery command got the staff to change the plan of campaign at the last moment. They wanted to show off their new guns at Liège and Namur and so lost the six weeks in which the Staff had minutely planned the march on Paris through the Belgian Luxemburg.

PROFESSOR

I did not know that. But it does not surprise me. Nearly all our public offices are jealous of one another, even at war with one another — real perfidious war in which all arms are good, short of the shedding of blood. Yet, after all, jealousy is only the homage of the poor to the rich, of the ugly to

the beautiful, of failure to success, the unconscious confession of inferior souls.

VON BÜLOW (*not listening to the PROFESSOR*)

The English are no fools. By nature they are lazy, and their policy is invariably that of following the line of least resistance. By always doing the minimum, they accumulate energy, and then, when everybody else has been exhausting his, up gets the lazy giant and clutches the thing most worth having and sticks to it.

VON TIRPITZ

They were not lucky with Cyprus all the same.

VON BÜLOW

Ah, that was because Disraeli knew neither history nor geography. He confused Cyprus with Rhodes, which he ought to have taken. Behind Rhodes there is a magnificent harbourage. Rhodes, not Cyprus, dominates Port Said. The Italians will keep it if they can.

[VON GWINNER and POSSEHL have been talking aside. VON GWINNER rises.]

VON GWINNER

I shall have to go. In short, the difficulty is that neither side can show the slightest desire for peace without the other side trying to get a moral victory out of it. Yet this cursed war can't go on forever.

POSSEHL

We must just treat the period as a long night during which we have done nothing.

VON GWINNER

An Arctic winter!

POSSEHL

Hardly, seeing that winter is the time when traffic in the Arctic zone is easiest. However, that is by the way. What we have to do is to find some sort of consolation for this frightful loss. By consuming and spending the minimum we come nearest to the *de facto* situation — that of suspended animation. The danger, of course, is that we consume so much out of proportion to our production, that we shall start again after the war with a heavy handicap in the race against other nations. The British blockade, in that respect, is not an unmitigated misfortune.

VON GWINNER (*brightening*)

How?

POSSEHL

Because while we are not exporting we are not importing and no balance is growing against us. England's imports, on the contrary, are out of all proportion to her exports. She can pay for them with her accumulations. We could not out of ours. So the commercial blockade may have saved us from a danger to which England is exposed, even in spite of her accumulations.

VON GWINNER

Well, that's consoling from your point of view as a merchant.

POSSEHL

What I am afraid of is that we may lose sight, in the political settlement of the question, of our supply of minerals. It is all very well to talk of giving up German Lorraine, but it must not be forgotten that our mineral resources there are among the richest we have.

VON GWINNER (*approaching the PROFESSOR*)

Good-night. I must go.

[The PROFESSOR accompanies him to the door and returns. Lull. Regrouping.]

PROFESSOR

As regards the blockade, we have been thrown on our own resources with wonderful results. The inventive faculty of the nation has been stimulated under the intense pressure of necessity. We have experimented in fields of activity which commercialism would have repudiated as unpractical and tested theories and methods which have hitherto been sneered at by . . .

POSSEHL

Say the word, Professor . . . business men. Quite right. Yet a proportion must be drawn before money's spent between the cost price and that

you can get from the purchaser. But you are quite right. The blockading of Germany has also had the effect you say.

PROFESSOR

Necessity is a hard taskmaster, but in the long run it has its uses and is not unkind. The blockade has also given us a chance of organising thrift and treating it not as cold-blooded avarice, but as a saving virtue, and if the war lasts long enough for it to eat into the character of the people, the Germans will have their *bas de laine* like the French.

BALLIN

And be as unenterprising, if that's so.

PROFESSOR

No, my dear man, that is your mistake. You are confusing cause and effect. The French have killed enterprise by their economic system. After the war they, too, will have learnt something and you may be sure it will be in the sense of reaction. Just as ours will be against extravagance, theirs will be against excessive thrift. A protective system is a blockade. It has the same effect of isolation and throwing a nation on its own resources. In fact, enterprise and the inventive faculty stand almost in inverse ratio to each other.

BALLIN

Surely enterprise is an expression of the inventive faculty?

PROFESSOR (*laughing*)

Yes, you are right. Of course. I did not say exactly what I mean. I mean that the inventive faculty of a nation swings like a pendulum between two poles. They represent thrift and extravagance, abstract science and trading activity, calm progress of thought and research and exhaustion in the accumulation of wealth, individual prosperity and concentration of wealth . . .

BALLIN

Very interesting, Professor. Then you did not approve of the amalgamation of the Hamburg-Amerika and the Nord-Deutscher Lloyd?

PROFESSOR

I don't approve or disapprove of things, my dear Ballin. I merely watch the process of development. Germany like the United States will have a reaction after the war against trusts and combines and methods generally of suppressing competition and running the world for the benefit of a small minority of very rich and powerful men and a vast mass of down-trodden industrial serfs. I am not a friend of Cæsarism in politics and still less its friend in industry or trade. Industrial Cæsarism in the United States is having deplorable results, and the man who defeats it will defeat revolution and the terrible reaction preparing to crush it. The greater the swing up, the stronger the swing down. Social democracy in Germany owes its progress far more to industrial than to political Cæsarism.

BALLIN

Professor! I sometimes have a feeling of vertigo when I listen to you. I see the depth below and the height above, and the danger of allowing mere political busy-bodies to interfere with man's destiny.

PROFESSOR

I hope you know now what I mean by Fate and the quicksands into which political blindlings gallop their countries . . .

BALLIN

What a tragedy the past must seem to a man like you, Professor! But what about the future?

PROFESSOR (*to BALLIN*)

There can be only one satisfactory end to the war and that is that the power of England to rule the world be broken.

BALLIN

To whom would that be satisfactory?

PROFESSOR

To the world.

BALLIN

I seldom differ from you in opinion, dear Professor. You are so full of historical experience and broad-minded indulgence, but on this subject I

think you are hopelessly wrong, and I do know something from practice of the relative positions of England and Germany in the world.

PROFESSOR (*indignantly*)

If the only alternative were not the destruction of the power of Germany, I might have a less absolute opinion . . .

BALLIN

But there is a third alternative. It is that we both abandon the struggle.

PROFESSOR

Only to begin again?

BALLIN

No, my dear friend — never to begin again till mankind again forgets what war is.

VON BÜLOW

All anticipations of settlement are premature. When the parties get round the green cloth it will be a devil of a job to adjust all the interests and there will be bitter disappointments for many and not a few surprises. Any idea of resettling the world on the basis of confining the changes to the belligerent Powers is foredoomed. Besides, this war has been on too vast a scale and will be too inconclusive for peace to be attained with any regard to principles of justice.

PROFESSOR

It took the Powers engaged in the Thirty Years' War ten years to come to terms, and the fighting went on down almost to the very signing of the Peace in 1648.

VON BÜLOW

Anyhow, it will take many months to work out any useful solution, and you may rest assured the conclusion will respect neither rights nor claims. There can be no neutrals when the settlement comes. The whole world will have to go into the melting-pot.

PROFESSOR

What a muddle it will be! Men trying to solve the riddles of evolution on political principles of greed and ignorance! Heaven save us!

[PRINCE VON BÜLOW *taking leave—all follow his example. The PROFESSOR and the FRAU PROFESSORINN and daughter remain.*

PROFESSOR (*to the FRAU PROFESSORINN*)

Well, you see there are plenty of reasonable people in Germany still, dear.

DAUGHTER (*contemptuously*)

Reasonable! I hate your fish-blooded reasonable people, father.

PROFESSOR

Darling, warm-bloodedness has brought us to where we are.

[The DAUGHTER, evidently disagreeing, kisses her father and mother and retires.]

FRAU PROFESSORINN

Still, I have not heard a word of revolt about the asphyxiating gas. The Germans ought to feel ashamed of their country doing a mean, unmanly thing like using poisoned gas. It's no better than poisoning wells.

PROFESSOR

Yet, there is nothing worse in half-poisoning a man than in half-killing him with a piece of shell. You don't suppose, when he gets his jaw or arm or leg half wrenched off, he is in less pain than when he loses his senses by suffocation?

FRAU PROFESSORINN

Yes, I do. Suffocation is worse than any pain, because it's not only physical.

PROFESSOR

Mind, my darling, I am not defending the use of gas, but it is just as well to have one's mind clear about it. Men were using bows and arrows when gunpowder was invented. Just imagine the indignation of the archers when they were hit by cannon-balls and bullets, before they could get

near enough to hit back, hit by a thing they couldn't see coming and could not dodge. A cloud of arrows did relatively little harm. Its chief purpose was to upset the enemy formations and prepare the way for charging troops. In fact the gas serves the same purpose as the arrows of the Middle Ages. Remember, men are not bound to remain and be poisoned or suffocated, but can run away, and that's just the object of the gas.

FRAU PROFESSORINN

I can't argue with you. I know you're wrong, but I can't say where. It sounds reasonable, but I'm sure an Englishman as clever as you would have something to say in reply.

PROFESSOR

Perhaps.

FRAU PROFESSORINN

Anyhow, there is no particular merit in assaulting a man unawares, nor is it very brave and noble to give assurances that he can leave his door open with impunity and then, when he goes trustfully to bed, burgle him.

PROFESSOR

Necessity!

FRAU PROFESSORINN

Don't talk to me of necessity. It is a mere sham, an excuse for any villainy that seems to promise a

profit. What I say is this: Germany's invasion of Belgium and France was mere burglary. She got into her neighbours' houses before they could get weapons to defend themselves. Wherever she has won, as when she has used poisonous gases and flames, she has won by craft. As for her feats at sea, I blush at the thought of them. In fact, I was proud of being German till I saw Germans dumb about all these horrors and massacres.

PROFESSOR

Massacres!

FRAU PROFESSORINN

Yes, the massacres in Belgium were a St. Bartholomew's Day and will never be forgotten.

[Both arranging things, windows, etc. The PROFESSOR opens the door.]

It's all so mean and cruel.

[The FRAU PROFESSORINN goes out.]

PROFESSOR

Ready?

FRAU PROFESSORINN (*outside*)

All right.

[The PROFESSOR switches off the electric light.]

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE I

MAY 6

Garden-house in park at Potsdam. Under wide-spreading tree. Table. Rocking-chairs. Work-baskets. Socks. Flannel. Worsted on table and scattered on ground. Sunshades. Early summer sun.

The AMERICAN WRITER and PRINCE VON BÜLOW outside garden-house in conversation.

AMERICAN WRITER (*slow of speech*)

I owe everything to Germany and deplore this war, and what I deplore most is that I cannot find one word to say in Germany's defense.

VON BÜLOW

It had to come, as the Professor would say.

AMERICAN WRITER

Yes, he says it had to come, now it is here, but then, he is a fatalist, as all historians who are not mere politicians become. What I deplore is not the war, which might have done ultimate good, but the engineering of it.

VON BÜLOW

“A qui le dites-vous ?”

AMERICAN WRITER

Yes, I know.

VON BÜLOW

Any steadfast policy in Germany is impossible. His Majesty is the best of men, kind, conscientious, indefatigable, but too brilliant for a constitutional sovereign. In character he is wonderfully like his great ancestor, and if he had been King of Prussia only and absolute sovereign over it, and been inoculated with French instead of English tendencies, he might have rendered his country immense services.

AMERICAN WRITER (*surprised*)

How?

VON BÜLOW

By civilising it.

AMERICAN WRITER

Civilising it?

VON BÜLOW

Yes, by civilising it. My dear Sir, you don't know Germany as I do.

AMERICAN WRITER

Civilisation! You make a distinction between civilisation and "Kultur"!

VON BÜLOW

Certainly! Every nation has its "Kultur." Germany is only beginning to have the civilisation

which France has never lost, and which is latent in Italy.

AMERICAN WRITER

And the Anglo-Saxon?

VON BÜLOW

He has never had it. You are indignant. Civilisation, after all, has only an arbitrary meaning. I mean by it possession of the reflective spirit, something that no schooling can give. The spirit of the Italian peasantry, for instance. Few of them can even read, but they have understanding for the greater things of life — noble sentiment, beauty of form, elevation of character, the music of language. You Anglo-Saxons have not yet reached the unmixed enjoyment of these greater things. Your enjoyment of them is complicated by the desire to turn them to account and the race for wealth or position is a fatal bar to the growth of this higher state of development. We Germans had much of it. "Kultur" has been destroying it.

AMERICAN WRITER

I shall want to digest all that, Prince. It is startling. But to return to His Majesty, you don't think his influence has been good for Germany?

VON BÜLOW.

That depends. He has turned Germany into Anglo-Saxon grooves, and it has become as intellectually dull as all industrial and money-making communities are.

Enter the PROFESSOR — handshaking.

PROFESSOR

Please do not let me interrupt. You were making a very true remark about the intellectual dulness of money-making communities. Look at the Phœnicians, who, for all their wealth and commercial enterprise, have not left behind them a vestige of anything of the slightest value to posterity.

Enter VON ETTING.

VON ETTING

His Majesty will see Your Highness. Her Majesty will be here in a few minutes.

[Exeunt the AMERICAN WRITER and the PROFESSOR in conversation.]

VON BÜLOW

Well, Etting, things don't seem very brilliant.

VON ETTING

Just the same chaos as ever. No policy, no direction, no system, only a huge machine churning on and on.

VON BÜLOW

My poor Etting. You'll have to come to Italy and rest your nerves.

VON ETTING

Nerves! I have none left. I am a bit of the gear of this highly efficient machine.

VON BÜLOW

The thing everybody admires!

VON ETTING

I thought the war would save us from this abominable bourgeois materialism, but it is all hopeless.

VON BÜLOW

You need a rest, Etting.

VON ETTING

I have not had a fortnight off since I left you in 1905.

VON BÜLOW

His Majesty simply does not think of it. Shall I say a word to him? [Steps approaching.

Enter the KAISER and the KAISERIN, followed by GRÄFIN EMMA. Handshaking.

KAISERIN

How is the Princess?

VON BÜLOW

Never better. She has no time for ailments. Does not His Majesty look well?

KAISER

Nothing to complain of. Good news — good

sleep. Well, what are those confounded Italians up to?

[*Takes the PRINCE by the arm, and exeunt.*
 [The KAISERIN, dressed in black, settling herself to work, among the scattered materials. GRÄFIN EMMA mixing something from bottles with labels. Hands glass to the KAISERIN.

KAISERIN

It's not disagreeable — a taste of almonds! I suppose that's to make it palatable. Everything ought to be made palatable in life, dear Emma. Oh, this dreadful war! Is it never coming to an end?

[*Looks out into the trees.*

[GRÄFIN EMMA silent.

Has it not struck you, Emma, how wonderfully patient and considerate the Germans are? After all, they might have blamed us. [A pause.

His Majesty was right, Emma. He did not want war.

GRÄFIN EMMA (*without conviction*)

Yes, Ma'am.

KAISERIN (*surprised*)

You think His Majesty did want it?

GRÄFIN EMMA

If Your Majesty will allow me to express a mere private individual opinion, I think His Majesty's feelings (*Gefühle*) were against it, and his reason (*Vernunft*) was for it.

KAISERIN

I think, Emma dear, you are quite wrong. It was his feelings that carried him away. You were not at Berlin when His Majesty spoke to the crowd in front of the Palace. It was wonderful, Emma. It was the enthusiasm of the crowd. And you know how crowds affect His Majesty. [Pause.

The Crown Prince ought to be here by this time.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am. His Imperial Highness has a sore throat, and . . .

KAISERIN

Oh, the poor boy! How do you know, Emma? They never tell me anything. I don't think the poor boy is really strong.

GRÄFIN EMMA

They say, Ma'am, he is much stronger than he was. Sore throat is very common just now.

KAISERIN

You mean at the front.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am. They say it is the gas.

KAISERIN

What gas, Emma? They tell me nothing.

GRÄFIN EMMA

The English use a poisonous gas, and when the wind permits, they pump it into our trenches.

KAISERIN

Just think. Do our men die of it?

GRÄFIN EMMA

It suffocates them and they die in terrible agony.

KAISERIN

The English are such hypocrites, not truly religious, or they would have more respect for human suffering. All through the war their behaviour has been scandalous.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am, barbarous! They even mutilate the prisoners.

KAISERIN

Do you believe that, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am. It's awful to see the number of cases of blindness in our hospitals.

KAISERIN

But you said prisoners, Emma dear.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, but it is just the same. Our wounded men say the English are perfectly ferocious — like wild beasts.

KAISERIN

Have you spoken with them about it yourself, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

No, but everybody says so.

KAISERIN

And what about the French and Russians? What does everybody say about them?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Nothing at all, Ma'am.

KAISERIN

By the by, Emma, who are everybody?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Everybody I see, Ma'am.

KAISERIN

The ladies about the Court and their wounded husbands?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Not their husbands. They are not allowed to say anything even to their wives about the war.

KAISERIN

Then how do you know, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Perhaps the ladies do hear it from their husbands. Besides, Berlin is full of officials and officers who know the truth.

KAISERIN

My dear Emma, what is one to believe? By the by, Emma, why do you think the Italians will go against us?

GRÄFIN EMMA

My brother, Ma'am, says the Italians hate the Germans almost as much as they do the Austrians. That was when he was one of the *attachés* there, — some ten years ago.

KAISERIN

Do you mean during the Morocco affair?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am, I remember his indignation quite well. He said the Marquis Visconti Venosta was a notorious Anti-German. He was sent as chief delegate to Algeciras on that account.

KAISERIN

Yes, I remember. His Majesty spoke very strongly to the Ambassador about it. [A pause.] Read that letter to me again, Emma.

GRÄFIN EMMA (*taking a letter out of her satchel and reading*)

“His last words in his delirium were ‘Deutschland über Alles,’ which he was singing when his heart stopped.”

KAISERIN

It is terrible, Emma! Such a splendid boy, so handsome, so clever, so brave, and such a patriot! He felt the sense of the words. Germany truly held the first place in his heart. Oh, to think of all these fine boys being killed! When one of them dies of an accident, the whole family mourns the cruel fate which carried off their hope in the prime of his youth, and here are millions being killed artificially, and for what? However much I dislike that awful Professor and his pedantic ways, I can’t help thinking he is right about this war. It is a mere explosion of national anger, and if we had all kept our heads cool and not been in such a hurry, the war might have been averted.

[GRÄFIN EMMA looks incredulous.
You don’t think so, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

I have no opinion of my own, but if Your Majesty will permit me to suggest . . .

[Picks up an envelope from among the materials.

KAISERIN

What is that, Emma?

GRÄFIN EMMA

It seems to be a letter, but it has no writing outside.

KAISERIN

Open it, dear Emma. Probably another petition for peace.

GRÄFIN EMMA (*opening it and reading*)

“Your Majesty — I am merely a maid in Your Majesty’s service. I am engaged to a corporal in a Berlin regiment. He has been brought back wounded, with half his face shot away, and blind. He, whom his father and mother, crippled with age and rheumatism, relied upon to till their small holding, who rose with the sun, sober, hard-working, and honest as God’s daylight, can see no more. He, whose fine, manly voice sang with the birds in praise of God in the morning and in the evening, when he was still not too tired to make the valley resound with his song, is now dumb and a cripple. That, Your Majesty, is what this war means to his father and mother, and to me. I wish Your Majesty to know that I am mad with grief, and that I have vowed vengeance on you and all your kind for this cruel war. You think the German people are blind to your guilt. It is you who are blind. No German mother, wife, or bride (*Braut*) will ever forgive you. Nobody believes your lies. . . .”

KAISERIN (*sobbing*)

Oh! stop, Emma, stop! [GRÄFIN EMMA *stops*.
Go on, Emma, I must do something for that
girl.

GRÄFIN EMMA (*reading*)

“Nobody believes your lies. At first, we thought Germany was defending herself against enemies. But now we know from our wounded the real truth. I dare say Your Majesty has a kind heart, but what avails a kind heart if Your Majesty does nothing but be kind? I am not threatening Your Majesty with an assassin’s dagger, but I give Your Majesty a solemn warning that your house is doomed, that the German people, so patient, so good-natured, so peaceable and hard-working, consider that you have forfeited their trust. Socialism, anarchy, anything is better than an autocrat who can do, Madam, what your husband has done.”

KAISERIN (*indignant and aghast*)

What?

GRÄFIN EMMA (*reading*)

“His hand is against every man, and every man’s hand is against him.”

KAISERIN (*clutches GRÄFIN EMMA’s arm*)

Oh, Emma! Oh, Emma!

[*Sinks into her seat, staring.*

[GRÄFIN EMMA *jumps up in alarm.*

KAISERIN (*waving her off*)

The girl is so right, Emma. That's the worst of it. Look around us. Every civilised nation in the world is against us in spirit, if not in arms.

[GRÄFIN EMMA *sobbing*.]

(*Taking her in her arms.*) What, Emma! You!

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, my brother.

KAISERIN

The Captain?

GRÄFIN EMMA

Yes, Ma'am, killed.

KAISERIN

And all his young family and his farm (*Pacht*). Oh, how shocking, my poor, dear Emma, and you there so calm and I did not know.

[*The two women embrace.*

Don't let us read any more of that terrible letter. It has quite unnerved me.

GRÄFIN EMMA

I hope Your Majesty will pardon my saying so, but I think Your Majesty sympathises with the poor broken heart of the writer of this letter.

KAISERIN (*looking astonished*)

Dear Emma, is it your letter?

GRÄFIN EMMA (*sobbing*)

No, Ma'am.

KAISERIN

You helped the girl to write it?

GRÄFIN EMMA

No, Ma'am. I know the girl who wrote it, such a good, kind girl, who was devoted to Your Majesty.

KAISERIN

That pretty parlour-maid — I should like to see her.

GRÄFIN EMMA

Shall I read the rest of the letter?

KAISERIN

No, Emma, give it to me.

[*Taking it and reading. Throwing herself on her knees and burying her head in the arm-chair on which she had been sitting.*

[*Pause.*

[*Rising and looking determined and speaking with decision.*

Emma, my mind is made up. His Majesty was carried away by that crowd at the Palace gates, and made war because he heard in their cheers the voice of God. I too have now heard the voice of God. God has come to me through that girl. He has put a great resolve into my soul, and when I

prayed for His help He gave it, and now I know my duty to Him. It is to stop this war.

GRÄFIN EMMA (*throwing herself on her knees and kissing the KAISERIN's hand with fervour*)

Oh, Madam!

Enter the KAISER.

KAISER

Well, motherkin. Why, you have been crying!
What's the matter?

[*The KAISERIN nods to GRAFIN EMMA. Exit.*

Well?

KAISERIN (*throwing her arms around His Majesty's neck and heaving with sobs*)

Willie!

KAISER (*mistaking Her Majesty's emotion for joy at being with him*)

Well, well, here we are again, still both of us in the land of the living. [*The KAISERIN still sobbing.*

(*Getting impatient.*) Come now, sit down, motherkin, and let me tell you something about the war.

KAISERIN (*sitting down and wiping her eyes*)

No, William, no, tell me nothing about it. Nothing about the war. It is nothing but misery — cruel, unending misery — fatherless children, weeping widows and mothers, destitution everywhere,

destruction of the work of ages, human and divine. The war, Willie, is a wanton crime (*passionately*) a wanton, unpardonable crime. I have just heard the voice of God. He has raised it against us in the hearts of mankind. We are branded with the mark of Cain.

KAISER (*astonished*)

But, motherkin . . .

KAISERIN

You don't understand. I want Peace. (*Almost shouting.*) Peace at once!

KAISER

But, my dear wife! How can I give you peace at once or at all, except as the fruit of victory? We shall have peace in due course, when we have overcome our enemies, and down to now we have defeated them all.

KAISERIN

You don't see the war. You see only victories and brave men on their way to destruction, with the lust of fighting and blood in their eyes. You don't see them lying dead on the battle-field, every one of them a tragedy, their mothers and wives and children longing at home for their return, and the loved one lying dead, killed with less concern for his dear life than for that of a . . . Oh, William, you don't see the mothers, and widows, and children as I do, or you'd not be so heartless.

KAISER

I am not heartless, dear. But war is war.

KAISERIN

For God's sake, William, don't use that hackneyed phrase. War is murder, assassination, blasphemy, treachery, robbery, burglary, arson. It means every sin against God and man that mankind is capable of. It is nothing but a vast organized crime. How are you going to give back the millions of husbands, sons, and fathers you have had killed, to the families you have made destitute?

[The KAISER dumbfounded.]

You thought you heard the voice of God when those poor, ignorant people acclaimed you. You insulted God when you thought He spoke through their besotted cheers. God has spoken to me in the voice of the heart-broken, of those who look to Him for pity. You are blinded by your own blood-stained eyes. I see the suffering world, and God has stirred within me my mother's heart. It has gone out to the other women of Germany. What can you give us back, in return for what you have taken from us? We have given you the strong limbs of our children to make, create, and build up a great nation. They were beautiful children and they made Germany the greatest nation among God's peoples, a sober, honest, hard-working nation. What have you done with this greatest of God's gifts to a sovereign? If, on the Day of Judgment, God asks you that, William? The whole world sees what you do not see, your guilt, William.

KAISER (*in greatest agitation*)

But I did not want the war.

[Walking faster and faster up and down —
stopping in front of the KAISERIN.

It can't be stopped.

KAISERIN (*firmly*)

It can and must be stopped.

KAISER

How?

KAISERIN

I don't know how, but stop it must.

KAISER

You don't mean that we, the victors, must sue
for peace!

KAISERIN

Is diplomacy so helpless that it can't find some
method?

KAISER (*irresolute*)

I'll see. You know Italy has turned against us?

KAISERIN

Yes — But I thought . . .

KAISER

Bülow tells me she may declare war only against
Austria-Hungary . . .

KAISERIN

But is not that the same thing?

KAISER

It's frightfully complicated. Peace is frightfully complicated — a great deal more complicated than war. I hardly understand it myself. None of us are fighting our real enemies. The worst of it is we have to disguise our true purposes or the whole scaffolding would crumble to the ground. We are not yet ready for a diplomatic grouping in accordance with our ultimate objects, and you must trust me, my dear, to . . .

(Putting his hand to his head.) The Magyars want peace and the Czechs are openly hostile to us. We might have peace through Franz Josef! He has been hinting at it ever since the fall of Przemysl. That's why he appointed Burian. I don't like Burian. I believe him to be a Pro-Englander and Anti-German, but he is a very clever fellow, and if our enemies had not been so ignorant and stupid they would have taken advantage of his appointment and kept Italy quiet and forced peace. Franz Josef appointed him in Berchtold's place to spite us.

KAISERIN

Can't he be used? If you would only just stop hostilities for a little and try to see if you can't come to terms.

KAISER

What terms?

KAISERIN

Are you not fighting for anything?

KAISER

We are defending ourselves.

KAISERIN

Oh, William! How can you say such a thing, when you know you declared war on Russia.

KAISER

Well, if we had not, Russia would have declared war on us.

KAISERIN

How can you tell what Russia would have done? What sort of a life should we lead if we were to attack everybody we suspected as capable of attacking us? Besides, you know Russia was quite unprepared for war, and told me so yourself.

KAISER

She would have been ready in 1917 when her strategical railways were completed and then . . . Oh, my dear, sometimes I think I am not equal to the job I have inherited.

KAISERIN

You are the only sovereign in the world who is

equal to it, and now you must apply your mind to the task of peace. (*Pleadingly.*) You have done the task of making war so magnificently that you alone can say with honour — “I have beaten you all, but I am not a mere bloodthirsty ogre — I think we all must have had enough of this awful war. I now offer you peace.”

KAISER

That would be all right if we had sensible people to deal with, but we have n’t. They would all say we had been forced to yield, and the German people would revolt at such an indignity. However, I will see what can be done through Burian, to try and conciliate Italy almost at any price. “Au revoir,” my darling. It has done me good to hear you. What a lecture you have given me! You never gave me a lecture before . . .

[*The KAISERIN smiling. Exit the KAISER.*
[*The KAISERIN resumes work, stops, puts her hand over her eyes in deep contemplation.*
[*Pause.*

Enter the CROWN PRINCE unperceived by the KAISERIN.

KAISERIN (*suddenly becoming aware of the CROWN PRINCE’s presence, jumps to her feet*)

My darling boy!

CROWN PRINCE

Mother! (*Embracing.*) I have just seen father. How splendid he looks! But I say, mother, — we’re

in an awfully bad fix. The whole blessed thing 's going wrong.

KAISERIN (*bidding him sit down*)

How, dear?

CROWN PRINCE

We're going to lose. Of course, all the blame is being shoved on to me. I had n't any say in the matter, and have little even now.

KAISERIN

Who 's putting the blame on to you, dear?

CROWN PRINCE

I don't say anybody is actually putting the blame on me. It is n't what is said so much as what is not said.

KAISERIN

Said or not said by whom, Willie?

CROWN PRINCE

I don't say anything about father. Only . . .

KAISERIN

Well?

CROWN PRINCE

I did n't want the war. It is all very well to say when things go badly, "I did it for you," and when they go well, "I did it for myself." You know, mother, I had nothing really to do with it.

KAISERIN

But, my dear, you seemed so enthusiastic about it when you came that day to Potsdam.

CROWN PRINCE

You quite misunderstood me, dear mother. I only meant that it was inevitable. Father would n't see the inevitable. It lay with him and him alone to decide for or against it, and he must bear the whole responsibility of it. I wipe my hands of all responsibility.

Enter GRÄFIN EMMA.

GRÄFIN EMMA

May I remind Your Majesty that she has promised to visit the wounded at the Orangerie-Lazareth this afternoon.

KAISERIN

Oh, Emma, I had almost forgotten.

[Exit the KAISERIN on the CROWN PRINCE's arm. GRÄFIN EMMA arranging the materials.

CURTAIN

SCENE II

The KAISER's study at Schloss, Berlin, as in Part I, Act III.

VON ETTING in officer's uniform. *Maid brings in tray with tea and sandwiches. VON ETTING begins pouring out tea. Burns his fingers. Tea too weak. Waits. Begins again. Slices lemon. Listless. Interrupts operations to go to desk and look at a document. Returns—sips, etc., etc. Passes hand over his head—evidently tired. Throws himself into an arm-chair and puts a handkerchief over his eyes. A few moments pass.*

Enter MAID, who, seeing VON ETTING apparently asleep, goes out again and knocks at door. Voices. VON ETTING, standing up.

VON ETTING

Come in.

Enter the CHANCELLOR, PRINCE VON BÜLOW, and GENERAL VON BERNHARDI.

VON BÜLOW

Then, General, you do not think it would be a good thing if railway and mining accidents and shipwrecks could be avoided.

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

You mean that if I think war is necessary as a reaction against materialism, I ought to regard

occasions for display of the same virtues as in war as welcome as war. Logically, the parallel might be right if accidents could be organised. — But all that is by the way. The main thing now is to see we get an adequate return, and where essentials are concerned there is no distinction between friends and foes. Austria must go. Germany must have Trieste.

VON BÜLOW

And if the Italians get it?

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

We'll turn 'em out.

VON BÜLOW

Beati possidentes.

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

Trieste is Germany's bone and she'll let no two-penny-half-penny Power keep it. We can't get it at once, but we can get nearer it, and, just as a dislodged rock rolls down a slope, we'll roll down the Alps to the Mediterranean.

VON BÜLOW

Do you think the English and French would not see that game?

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

See it? No! Why, you'd have to take a hammer and chisel to open their eyes to anything so obvious.

VON BÜLOW

Their fatuity is only different from ours, my dear General, in the character of the blindness. We fill up the horizon with fanciful pictures of Eldorados. They sling their missiles at random, hoping some of them have hit, but, unable to distinguish friend from foe. Who could imagine that they would throw Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, and Turkey into our arms! But you can trust political wiseacres to gobble any fly.

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

If Italy fails us, there can be only one policy for Germany, that is to secure an outlet over Bulgaria and Turkey down to the Persian Gulf and make a bee-line for Asia. That would divide the eastern hemisphere into two longitudinal areas. Western Europe — that is, England, France, Spain, Italy, and the smaller Atlantic States — on the one side, and Germany, with her line of domination through Austria-Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Turkey, on the other. Russia would be driven out of Poland and the Baltic and have to fight out the Far-Eastern problem with England and Japan by herself.

VON BÜLOW

A heavy task for Germany, my dear General. Alsace was more than an armful.

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

Yes, but that was because we did not strike down opposition with the mailed fist.

VON BÜLOW

So you propose to rule Bulgaria and Serbia with the mailed fist?

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

It will be no question of choosing. They have been trained in subjection and are born to it. They will appreciate intelligent German rule under which they will develop and prosper.

VON BÜLOW

And Turkey?

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

It will be the German India.

VON BÜLOW

Upon my soul, you would shoulder a big burden, and do you think His Majesty would lend himself to that gigantic scheme?

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

His Majesty will do, you may be sure, what will commend itself to his people, and his people will want a big crop after such a sowing of blood and treasure.

VON BÜLOW

And you think the Bulgarians and Turks will rise to your scheme.

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

They will not be asked. We are in possession.

The Turks have tried again and again to wriggle out of our grip and have failed. Every day we are strengthening it.

VON BÜLOW

And you fear no revolt?

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

None. We have that silly mystic, Enver, to shove forward as the Saint and machine-guns to play the part of the Devil.

VON BÜLOW

Good Lord!

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

My dear Prince, you belong to old Germany. You don't realise that we are in the midst of an upheaval which may settle the conditions of Europe for a thousand years. The old races have had their time. It is a new one — the German race — that is now going to have its time. For a hundred years the German race has been preparing for this war. It has come. Rome had her day, England has had hers. Germany's turn has come, and we shall only sheathe our sword when the German Empire extends from the Baltic to the Indian Ocean.

VON BÜLOW

And suppose Bulgaria and Turkey find you out in time, and Enver and the German officers are kidnapped before you secure your occupation.

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

They are too stupid and lazy to do anything so original.

VON BÜLOW

And the Reichstag and the money-bags?

GENERAL VON BERNHARDI

The money-bags will burst with plenty for a *fait accompli*. I must go. *Au revoir.* [Exit.]

VON BÜLOW

What do you think of Bernhardi's policy?

CHANCELLOR

I am afraid he's right in one respect. We were like a bulb which was being squeezed. And now lateral grips are forcing us into a policy we did not originally contemplate and, instead of getting our ports on the North Sea, we shall become an Asiatic power.

VON BÜLOW

You don't seriously mean we may annex our allies?

CHANCELLOR

I'm afraid it can't be helped. It's the only thing we can do. Besides, it's more natural than it looks. It will be a great blessing to Austria, Serbia, and Bulgaria to be properly administered by competent Prussian officials, and as for Turkey, we are quite as able to govern her as England is to govern India.

VON BÜLOW

That's what we've come to. The very Decalogue has gone into the melting-pot. But . . . *que voulez-vous?* *Qui veut la fin veut les moyens.* And all this is done in the name of patriotism!

CHANCELLOR

The patriotism is genuine enough.

VON BÜLOW

Yes, just as a thief can be genuinely attached to his booty. I prefer our older indifference to patriotism. By the by, you know what Heine said of a German's patriotism in his time?

CHANCELLOR

No.

VON BÜLOW

He said a Frenchman loved his country as he loved his mistress — at her feet one day, abusing her another, jealously watching her virtue, suspicious, trusting and distrusting her, loving her, hating her, everything by turns. The Englishman loved his country as he did his wife — a solid, substantial affection without passion; she was there at the head of his table and had to be respected as a part of himself. The German loved his country with the devotion men felt for their grandmothers.

CHANCELLOR

You, surely, prefer Bernhardi's patriotism to that!

Enter the PROFESSOR.

VON BÜLOW

Not when it takes the form of dragging his country's reputation in the mud. We're speaking of Bernhardi.

PROFESSOR

I don't think you do him justice when you say that. English writers at the beginning of the nineteenth century wrote in the same style — Pasley, for instance. I could show you whole passages in his book which you would fancy Clausewitz, Treitschke, or Bernhardi had copied almost to the wording. We are going through the same phase of development at the beginning of the twentieth century as the English at the beginning of the nineteenth. Bernhardi is merely a belated writer in a belated age. There is a painful lack of political subtlety in the present age.

VON BÜLOW

Subtlety has never been a quality of statesmanship. In statesmanship a man has to play the part of the artist who is given a dead man's picture to finish. Besides, by the time he is in a position to emancipate his policy from superannuated traditions, he is sick of his master or his master's sick of him.

PROFESSOR

Is there no remedy?

VON BÜLOW

None! The only great statesmen or diplomatists I have ever come across have been discovered with as great an indifference to class and training as poets.

PROFESSOR

I wonder whether this war is not going to play the part misfortune plays in the life of the individual.

VON BÜLOW

“The lessons of adversity” — but if it destroys our trade and our industry?

PROFESSOR

I don’t think it will do that. The only war which was not followed by an immense revival was the “Thirty Years’ War,” which killed off such a proportion of the populations of the countries concerned that new generations had to grow up before industrial progress could be resumed.

VON BÜLOW

And this war, what mortality!

PROFESSOR

Bad as it is, it is not yet a mortality of coming generations as the “Thirty Years’ War” was. The women are there, and their mental and practical qualities have been stimulated by the war. After all, the life of a nation depends on its women.

VON BÜLOW

Professor, you don't surely propose that we shall have to permit polygamy?

PROFESSOR

No, not exactly, but Nature has her own ways of righting things, and all the laws of empires are mere switches against a stone wall when they come up against the great facts of Nature. War, moreover, may operate as a rest for the intelligence. It employs little more than the latent instincts of earlier stages in development, from the treachery of the Australian savage, through all the stages of more or less primitive men: bestiality, blood-lust, cruelty, theft, and so on,—instincts which, having lain so long dormant, seem, when awakened, to overflow with accumulated energy. While war lasts, the higher faculties, on their side, seem to lie dormant and accumulate energy. This tallies with historical experience. After nearly every great war there has been an outburst of intelligence and art and literature.

VON BÜLOW

That's a very ingenious explanation, Professor, just the opposite of the usual one, but I quite agree with you that history has been too much detached from mental physiology. Climate, natural resources, soil, the direction of navigable rivers are all working out or creating problems, but the fixed denominator in the history of mankind must always be man's character. I see your point, Professor.

PROFESSOR

And that is just the element of which least account is taken. That these lower instincts, which are awakened in war, are merely dormant, or overlain by a stratum of higher mentality, is shown by the fact, which is not yet appreciated, that the growth of the individual is a succession of different stages in the development of his species, if not of vertebrates in general. So that every individual has already passed through the stage to which, in wartime, he reverts. But here am I, lecturing you, our greatest statesman.

VON BÜLOW

Lecturing! Why, Professor, you are giving me ideas for statesmanship, and statesmen need them badly. "*An nescis, magister, quantilla prudentia regitur orbis?*"

PROFESSOR

Nor will that observation ever grow less time-honored.

VON BÜLOW

"*Nil novi sub sole !*"

Enter BALLIN.

CHANCELLOR

Oh, I am glad to see you, Ballin. I could not get you on the telephone. His Majesty has sent word that he wants to see you to-night.

BALLIN

The Professor here, whom I met *Unter den Linden*, told me His Majesty wanted me, so I came along. Well, Excellency, what news from the front?

CHANCELLOR

Oh, the usual thing.

BALLIN

Any prospect of peace?

CHANCELLOR

Not the remotest.

BALLIN

And mediation?

CHANCELLOR

Impossible.

[BALLIN surprised.]

Oh, no. I am not against it, but it's impossible. Germany can only accept it as a victorious belligerent, and her enemies are not defeated and would n't listen to it.

PROFESSOR

In the Russo-Japanese War, Russia would not listen to mediation even after the battle of Mukden, because she did not consider herself beaten, though the Japanese were victorious and were ready to accept it. If she had accepted, she might have spared herself this war.

BALLIN

I think the Germans, if they knew the hopelessness of the struggle on both sides, are too reasonable not to understand that we have to choose between evils.

CHANCELLOR

I am sorry I can't discuss the matter with you just now. But if you, Mr. Ballin, will draw a presentation of the position as you view it, I feel sure His Majesty would give it the attention he always gives to your view.

BALLIN

I have just received a letter from Dernburg. Some passages may interest you.

[Takes voluminous document out of his pocket, unfolds it, finds pages. Reading:]

“The war has solved several problems.

“1. That England has the supremacy of the sea and can keep it by bottling us up. Germany's geographical position we can't change, and unless we had not only the mouths of the Rhine and the Scheldt, but also Dunkirk, Boulogne, Hâvre, Cherbourg, and half a dozen other places, besides possession of the great Belt and the Sound, we could not play a part at sea which would rival that of England. So we had better give up that idea once for all, have done with it, and try for something else.

“2. The present war has been a failure — a failure for us, in spite of our victories. Its new

methods paralyse one another, and, apart from the first advantages, which may be gained by surprise, it serves no purpose in Western Europe. France thought she could get back Alsace by war — she has failed. England thought she could destroy the German navy by war — she has failed. Germany thought she could get a colonial Empire by war — she has failed. Austria thought she could get the mastery in the Balkans by war — she has failed. Russia thought she could arrest the outbreak of Revolution and the break-up of the Empire of the Czars — she has failed and her defeat may accelerate their downfall. And all these failures will have made us all bankrupt. That is the net result down to now, and there is no chance of betterment for any of the parties.”

PROFESSOR

Thank God! [The CHANCELLOR surprised.
(With emphasis). Yes, you will think I am a
“little German” or a Pro-Englisher.

BALLIN (reading)

||

“One fancies at a distance that the whole of Europe is mad. When I lie awake with nothing to hear but the steady throb of the great city, I can hardly realise that there are millions of men engaged in a gigantic work of murder, that they are hurling at each other tons and tons of huge pieces of metal, over miles of God’s earth, tearing up the patient soil which is only waiting to yield food and raiment, kill-

ing brave men in the prime of life and born for their country's glory, men who are the chief asset in every country's wealth, one another's producers and consumers — it seems to me so pitiful that men should not have more intelligence than not to see that every man they kill is an impoverishment of the world and a source of distress to the innocent. Then I think of all the kind people I know in these different countries, — yet they are carrying on a work of destruction against each other with a bitterness such as the world has never before witnessed. I ask who is responsible for this colossal mistake, this artificial loosening on mankind of all the calamities it has ever undergone, and all for no good whatsoever to anybody."

PROFESSOR

Of course, Dernburg must not say such things in Germany. You had better warn him. In America people are not maddened as they have become here. Here, nobody will listen to anything that suggests peace. Nothing but the destruction of the British Empire, annexation of Belgium, and an indemnity that will cripple France for a century will please our "men in the street." And if you express the slightest doubt as to feasibility, you are damned as a pro-Englander. They are all mad. Still, one must make allowances. The majority in all countries is composed of men whose minds become easily unbalanced, and in times of emotion their feelings burst through their thin intellectual shell.

BALLIN

Besides, whatever place we get will be of no use, unless it secures us against war for a generation at least.

PROFESSOR

There is only one guarantee for the peace of Europe.

BALLIN

What is that?

PROFESSOR

I dare hardly express it while the world is gravitating towards oligarchic despotism. *[A pause.]*

It is the supremacy of parliamentary institutions.

BALLIN

They have proved a source of weakness.

PROFESSOR

Just for that reason their supremacy is a check. They are a check in the prosecution of war, — true, — but for the same reason they're a check on those who engineer it. Hasty decisions are necessarily more or less speculative. Among individuals the risk merely exposes the one party to losing to another and, in the event, the community loses nothing. A mistake of statesmanship involves the whole community. Parliamentary government is a safeguard against hasty decisions.

BALLIN

Only, of course, to the extent to which parliamentary control reaches.

PROFESSOR

Of course. Both a Foreign Relations Committee and a second Chamber with powers of delaying final decisions are requisite. Government without them is practically as great a danger to peace as Cossack or Prussian absolutism.

Enter VON ETTING.

VON ETTING

Gentlemen! His Majesty wishes to see the Chancellor alone. He has just arrived.

[Exeunt all save VON ETTING and the CHAN-
CELLOR.

Enter the KAISER.

KAISER

Sit down, Bethmann.

[Looks over correspondence on his desk. Pause.

I had a long talk with Bülow this morning, and have just seen Jagow. It looks all very bad. Another of your mistakes, Bethmann. You thought England would not stir.

[The CHANCELLOR looks distressed.

(Walking up and down the room.) Italy is in a quandary. I don't see how she is going to extricate herself from her obligations. Provided she keeps

her promise to us, her intervention . . . But I have no faith in Burian. He's a Magyar. No Magyar can be trusted to work for us. [Pause.]

Do you know all about Burian?

CHANCELLOR

No, Sir, not more than from having met him when he came here in February.

KAISER

How, in God's name, are you going to manage him without knowing more of him than that? A statesman, especially a clever one like Burian, wants a lot of study. Do you know anything about his political education and antecedents?

CHANCELLOR

Not much, Sir.

KAISER

There is no guile about you, Bethmann. And it is difficult to say harsh words to you. But, frankly, you are not a political genius.

CHANCELLOR

My resignation is in your hands, Sir.

KAISER

It's no use talking about resignations now. Your resignation now would do you little honour and me none. [Pause.]

Well, I'll post you up in Burian. He has the

art of holding his tongue. Neither you nor I have that. (*Laughing lugubriously.*) More's the pity. He is a silent man, not because he is a fool who has nothing to say. He has a great deal to say when he thinks it desirable to say it, but with the pack of idiots around him — except Esterhazy — I suppose he has got back Esterhazy — Do you know Esterhazy?

CHANCELLOR

No, Sir.

KAISER

God in heaven!

[*Pause.*]

Well, Esterhazy was Aehrenthal's right-hand man — his wife's English — and he led us a devil of a dance in the Bosnia-Herzegovina affair. Aehrenthal, Burian, and Esterhazy made an anti-German trio. Aehrenthal was half a Czech and his wife a Magyar, and the others were both Magyars. We beat them with the aid of England.

CHANCELLOR

Of England, Sir?

[*Looks surprised.*]

KAISER

Yes, Bethmann. England backed the wrong horse. Like you, she tried to handle the Bosnia-Herzegovina question on "mathematical lines," as the Professor would say, drove Austria back into our arms, and — but you know all that, Bethmann?

CHANCELLOR

Yes, Sir, but I did not think England . . .

KAISER

No, of course not, Bethmann. You thought we had all the merit! Not a bit of it. We owed our success to the bungling of our opponents. That's the true art of diplomacy; know your man, get the lie of his weaknesses, watch for them, let him entangle himself in his own net, and then despatch him! (*Laughing.*) That's not bad for a crowned head, is it, Bethmann? You ought to be a crowned head, Bethmann, — you really ought.

[*The CHANCELLOR looks perplexed.*

Poor old Bethmann! You must n't mind my letting off my steam. But beware of Burian. Although a silent man, he has a great deal of personal magnetism. When he was at Athens he captivated the whole diplomatic corps, and between captivating and capturing *il n'y a qu'un pas*. I am expecting Jagow — so wait here. I'll be back in ten minutes.

[*Exit.*

[*The CHANCELLOR walks up and down the room in evident agitation — looks at despatch which is lying open at the edge of the desk — reads, takes up blue pencil, underlines something, continues walking up and down. Three minutes elapse.*

Enter HERR VON JAGOW.

VON JAGOW

His Majesty flown?

CHANCELLOR

No, he'll be back in less than ten minutes. Well, Jagow, what do you think of this?

VON JAGOW

I quite expected it. It was a choice of evils. If Italy had not stood firm against Austria — Austria would probably have defected. Austria is not a willing partner in the war. Nor is her Sovereign.

CHANCELLOR

Nor Burian.

VON JAGOW

Burian is still a dark horse here.

CHANCELLOR

His Majesty knows all about him.

VON JAGOW

Indeed! He was always jealously kept in the background. I know a good deal about him. As joint Minister of Finance of Austria-Hungary, he administered Bosnia-Herzegovina. . . . His ideal is a powerful and independent Austro-Hungarian Empire.

CHANCELLOR

And what about the racial difficulties?

VON JAGOW

He thinks they are exaggerated, and that a federation properly engineered can work quite satis-

factorily, and even has advantages over a homogeneous empire. Remember, he is not a blood-and-iron statesman, and has, I am afraid, the contempt of the philosopher for our Prussian pole-axe system of government.

CHANCELLOR

You speak as if you rather sympathised with him, Jagow.

VON JAGOW (*laughing*)

I don't know Your Excellency as a blood-and-iron statesman either.

CHANCELLOR

Good Lord, no. But none of us are, and why we are engaged in this senseless and hopeless struggle, God only knows.

VON JAGOW

The machine.

Enter the PROFESSOR.

CHANCELLOR

Yes, the machine.

PROFESSOR (*shaking hands with VON JAGOW*)

Ah, the machine. Have you read "Frankenstein"?

BOTH

No.

PROFESSOR

“Frankenstein” was a conception of Shelley’s wife. A German student working away with the mysteries of life is able to infuse it into a figure he has made, with terrible results. It is like a symbolic vision of Germany of to-day. We have infused life into a huge machine, and its wheels and cables go whirling on and we are too weak and small to stop them. Its huge arms, like those of Frankenstein’s monster, smite us if we go near them.

Enter the KAISER.

[The PROFESSOR bows, and is about to retire.

KAISER

Professor, I want to see you later.

[Exit the PROFESSOR.

(Going over to VON JAGOW and shaking his finger in mock anger at him.) Jagow, I hear you have used the word “Peace.” *[VON JAGOW looks guilty.*

Yes, Sir. You know that word has been struck out of the German vocabulary. God, what a pack of idiots we shall look to posterity! We are all sick of this senseless war, and all want peace, and, though we have courage to face every instrument of torture our engineers have been able to devise, not one of us has the courage to say, “Enough, let us stop,” which must be the feeling at the bottom of the heart of every man in Europe who is not an abject idiot. Wait in Etting’s room.

[Exit VON JAGOW.

(*To the Chancellor.*) Have you read that letter from Dernburg? It is very sensible, is n't it?

CHANCELLOR

Very.

KAISER

What's the use of keeping him there? I don't see the use of any of our diplomacy. If Dernburg can't do anything, it is beyond achievement. He has more brains than the whole German diplomatic corps combined. I should never have listened to you all.

CHANCELLOR

I hope Your Majesty does not include me.

KAISER

No, Bethmann, I will do you the justice of saying you backed me. Poor Dernburg! Do you remember his first official dinner? I chaffed him about tucking his serviette round his neck. "What ho, Dernburg! Going to be shaved?" Poor chap! I was sorry afterwards. He looked so humiliated. I remember a great Republican politician before your time, Bethmann, a clever fellow. We christened him "Old Hurricane." He could not eat his soup or blow his nose or cough or sneeze without making such a racket that we all had to wait till it was over. I liked him. When I was sounded about his appointment as Ambassador to Berlin, however, I had to give way to the objection to his deplorable manners. Yet that man, like Dernburg,

could have doubled up all the diplomatic tribe of Europe if he had had a tussle with them. What a huge place trifles like these play in the world! Except in war-time, Bethmann; war is a wonderful leveller. You don't kill your enemy with fine manners. That's what made Napoleon great. He cared only for merit. So do I. The English can afford to keep up the old system of patronage, and allow themselves the luxury of an alliance between feudalism and demagogues. We can't, Bethmann. It has brought England to the brink of ruin. This war has saved her, reluctant as she has been to allow herself to be influenced by merit and ability in her selection of men. That little devil Jellicoe has dished us. Tirpitz is like you, Bethmann. You are both too tall. Tall men are no good in war-time — their wits are too slow. Good enough for the Staff in peace-time. Old Fritz had big men to do the fighting because they were too stupid and slow-witted to run away, but he took care to put little devils in command of them — a clever little devil himself was Old Fritz. By the by, Bethmann, instruct Dernburg to come back at once. [Pause.

Is Bülow here?

CHANCELLOR

Yes, Sir.

KAISER

Send him in.

[Exit the CHANCELLOR.

[The KAISER walks up and down in contemplation.]

Enter PRINCE VON BÜLOW.

I have made up my mind. We must have peace — not at any price — no — but peace.

VON BÜLOW

But if Italy joins the Allies?

KAISER

She must not join the Allies. Bülow, you will have to promise her everything she asks for rather than let her. Tell Burian I want peace as much as he does. If Italy goes against us, God only knows when the war will end. Promise her Trieste, the Trentino, Valona. What else can she want?

VON BÜLOW

That is already a great deal, Sir.

KAISER

Won't that satisfy her?

VON BÜLOW

None of it is ours to promise, Sir.

KAISER

Promise it all the same, Bülow, — I'll make Austria-Hungary agree. Damn her, what right has she to raise difficulties?

VON BÜLOW

Sonnino, Sir, demands immediate performance; he wants immediate possession.

KAISER

Does he not trust our word? If I say he shall have it, is n't that enough? Good God, surely my word — more than word — my sign manual, Germany's bond, is good enough.

VON BÜLOW

No, Sir! He thinks we may not be able, or willing, to fulfil any arrangement made under pressure of necessity.

KAISER

God help us!

VON BÜLOW

Italian public opinion disbelieves our promises.

KAISER

Italy does not respect her own.

VON BÜLOW

That only makes her the more suspicious. Sonnino will agree to nothing without immediate execution.

KAISER

Does he think we shall wriggle out of our engagements after the war is over?

VON BÜLOW

I don't think, Sir, he goes so far as that. But he knows that, when the Powers meet to discuss

peace, whatever the preliminaries may be, there are so many interests involved that preliminaries, engagements, even treaties entered into, *pendente lite*, have little chance of being upheld *tels quels*. All will go into the melting-pot, except organised possession.

KAISER

But if we gave them possession, how should we know they would not all the same find a pretext for not observing the promises they made?

VON BÜLOW

This mutual distrust, I fear, will cause a deadlock.

KAISER

I can't think matters are so bad as you fear, Bülow. Promise Germany's absolute guarantee of execution. They can't ask us to have more trust in them than they have in us.

VON BÜLOW

May I ask Your Majesty's instructions for the alternative case of refusal by Italy?

KAISER

Separate peace between Austria-Hungary and Russia. You can tell Burian that on your way back. [VON BÜLOW looks incredulous.]

You look incredulous, Bülow, but I think Russia must want peace. Well, it is a race now. If Burian gets peace with Russia before Italy mobilises, we

win. If Italy mobilises before he gets that peace — by God, Bülow, I fear we shall lose. — Now, you know my intentions. The fate of Germany is in your hands. They are capable hands, Bülow. With God's help you will win. Bear in mind I want peace as soon as possible. Impress on Sonnino the gravity of his decision. It may mean war for years. It may mean the bombarding of Venice, the destruction of Italy's cathedrals and palaces. It may mean Belgium over again in Italy.

VON BÜLOW

Political Italy, Sir, is opportunist. Cavour's opportunism made her and opportunist she remains.

KAISER

Well, use the arguments you can, but for the sake of Germany, for the sake of your Kaiser, I pray God's help you may succeed. Good-bye, Bülow.

[Exit VON BÜLOW and the CHANCELLOR.

The KAISER sinks into an armchair, and buries his head in his hands.

CURTAIN

ACT III

The KAISER's private study at Imperial Schloss at Berlin.

OLD MAN and MAID tidyng. OLD MAN in half-livery, taking up calendar.

OLD MAN

See the date?

MAID

Yes — 6th May.

[Tearing off the sheets of the calendar.

OLD MAN

What's to-day?

MAID

Sunday.

OLD MAN

Nice Sunday's work! (Pause.) Did n't you see the fly-sheet, last night?

MAID

What is a fly-sheet?

OLD MAN

Lokal-Anzeiger scattered them free all along *Unter den Linden* from their motor-van. Italy mobilised. War to be declared to-day.

[Tearing off the sheets of the calendar and leaving it at 23d May.

MAID

I say the more fools they. Why do they want war, when they can keep out of it? There will be no more wars when women get the vote.

OLD MAN (*amazed*)

Why, you are not a suffragette?

MAID

But I am.

OLD MAN

It's as good as your place to be a suffragette here.

MAID

Maybe. I was n't, but I am now. I'm anything you like that's against war. I have three brothers in the Army — that is, I had. One's killed (*sits down and puts her handkerchief to her eyes*) — but what's the use of crying? One's invalided and the other's in the trenches, God knows where. I'm a Socialist too, if you want to know, old man, a red-hot Socialist.

OLD MAN

But it's as good as your place.

MAID

Shut up! (*Halt's Maul!*) I have ceased to care whether I have a place or not. Karl's not been heard of for three months.

[*Choking and dusting violently.*

OLD MAN

Poor girl! Were you engaged?

MAID

I was going to be.

OLD MAN

Oh, he'll turn up. Most of 'em turn up.

MAID

No such luck! This awful war!

OLD MAN

Don't say anything against the war, my girl.
It's as good as your place.

[*The MAID looks at him inquiringly.*
(*Nods to her, whispering.*) If it goes on much
longer, there will be trouble.

[*Noise outside the door.*

MAID

Look out! (*Achtung!*)

OLD MAN (*on steps, winding up clock*)
Look out o' window and see the time.

MAID

9.30.

Enter VON ETTING with despatch-box.

[Exeunt MAID and the OLD MAN with steps.

VON ETTING (*opening despatch-box and yawning — unfolding and reading a large sheet in large handwriting — muttering slowly*)

Same old crew! Ballin, Professor, Helfferich, Gwinner. [Yawning again.]

Enter the CROWN PRINCE — handshaking.

CROWN PRINCE

I say this is beastly bad news about Italy.

VON ETTING

I've ceased to think anything matters.

CROWN PRINCE

When do you expect His Majesty?

VON ETTING

We arrived late last night at Potsdam. I came on by the early express; so I have only had forty winks in the train.

CROWN PRINCE

What does His Majesty say?

VON ETTING

Hopes, hopes still, probably, Italy's only bluffing.

CROWN PRINCE

It's awful, this optimism — a national calamity. I can do nothing. We have to face the fact that we're beaten, Etting, and His Majesty can't see it.

VON ETTING

I'm afraid I don't see it either. I think it is we the blindlings who engineered the war who are beaten. My eyes are opened.

CROWN PRINCE

We who engineered the war! Why, Etting, the war had been engineered for ten years back.

VON ETTING

Well, we pressed the button.

CROWN PRINCE

What's the use of discussing who's to blame now? I think the peacemakers are chiefly to blame. It was they who gave us a false sense of security, the brutes!

[VON ETTING, *smiling*.]

Etting, you bore me. You're so changed. [Pause. What's that fiend Wilson up to?

VON ETTING

The Lusitania!

CROWN PRINCE

It will be madness to cave in. Tirpitz says if we do, he'll have to resign. Now we've defied 'em we must stand firm. We shall have to fix up the reply to-day. . . . Anyhow, Etting, His Majesty lets me have a say in things now.

VON ETTING

Tirpitz says his orders could n't be countermanded.

CROWN PRINCE

Could n't be countermanded? He admits the orders then.

VON ETTING

That's just it. The machine — the terrible machine, Highness! When an order goes out it is executed to the letter, to the minute, and nothing can stop it. This war has taught me to loathe the machine. Prince Bülow gave me "Frankenstein" to read.

CROWN PRINCE

What's "Frankenstein"?

VON ETTING

It's good to go to sleep on. I'll give you the Prince's copy. "Frankenstein" is a description of the German machine of to-day written a century ago by Shelley's wife.

CROWN PRINCE

Who's Shelley?

VON ETTING

Shelley, Highness, was an English poet and a friend of Byron.

CROWN PRINCE

Afraid my education's been neglected. I remember reading that Johnnie's "Don Juan" on the sly. When the war's over, Etting, I'm going to

"improve each shining hour." That's an English quotation. Is it Shakespeare?

[VON ETTING *smiling*.]

Damn it, Etting, you have n't the misfortune to be born a Royal Prince. You have no idea what a handicap it is in life. I very nearly chucked it and wish I had n't yielded to persuasion. (*Both yawning.*) No ambition — no . . .

[VON ETTING *has begun to breathe heavily*.
Poor chap, dead tired. [Rises and quietly exit.

[Pause. Noise of conversation outside door.

CROWN PRINCE (*outside*)

This is the only room ready as yet. Herr von Etting is taking a rest there.

(VON ETTING) *jumping to his feet*

Come in.

Enter the PROFESSOR and BALLIN — handshaking.

Excuse me. I must see about several things. We're all maids-of-all-work just now. [Exit.

[BALLIN *sits down*.

PROFESSOR

That wretched Lusitania affair has done us infinite harm.

BALLIN

Yes, more harm than a defeat.

PROFESSOR

More harm than a defeat? If that were all!

BALLIN

Yes, it has completely dished us in America. Not that it was illegal. There are plenty of arguments to justify the sinking of a ship laden with ammunition for the enemy. But it was just the one thing to avoid doing, especially after having threatened it.

PROFESSOR (*surprised*)

Why, especially?

BALLIN

Because the threat had no effect and showed American public opinion gave us credit for more humanity in deed than in word. We pitched that good repute overboard and to destroy ammunition that would n't have sufficed to level a few yards of wire entanglements we sacrificed in cold blood hundreds of innocent lives.

PROFESSOR

We are too brutally frank, Ballin.

BALLIN (*violently*)

Call it frank if you like. If it is frank to do devilry merely because you have threatened it, frankness be damned! Besides, it has started a new national hatred.

PROFESSOR (*walking up and down the room*)

National hatred is stronger than governments. It takes policy and attempts at conciliation ages

to overcome. The hatred of the French for the English who devastated Anjou and Touraine lived on for centuries and it is only now that the Entente is effacing the memory of the ruins of villages and towns which the English sacked and destroyed in their dynastic wars. The Germans of the Rhine-land and the Palatinate never forgave the French, who left their country in ruins. The French Empire eventually paid for it at Leipzig and Waterloo. The Spaniards and the Portuguese still at the present day hate the French for the Peninsular war. Have the Poles or Magyars ever forgiven the Russians? or the Irish the English?

BALLIN

I don't dispute what you say. But the Boers seem to have forgiven the English in spite of the twenty thousand women and children of the concentration camps.

PROFESSOR

The English knew it or rather felt it and lost so little time in granting them free government that the same generation that suffered absorbed the antidote. That was what saved South Africa for the British Empire.

BALLIN

They are a marvellous people, Professor, in spite of their stupidity! But I must not say that or I shall be lynched as a Pro-Englisher for telling the truth.

PROFESSOR

You would be in good company anyhow and not between two *larrons*.

BALLIN

Pas bête, cher professeur, bien que dur.

PROFESSOR

Pardon, I forgot.

BALLIN

It's all right. No sensible conversation is possible if one has to be on the lookout for people's prejudices. Well, you were speaking of national hatreds. What about the Belgians?

PROFESSOR

Yes, we shall have to do something great as an antidote among the existing generation. Otherwise, we shall have all the fierceness of the Polish hatred on our western as on our eastern and south-eastern flank, for Bohemia is another case of bungling procrastination.

BALLIN

But what can we do?

PROFESSOR

Yes, what! (*Smiling.*) I hope His Majesty won't undertake the rebuilding himself.

BALLIN

You know I have never been able to see His Majesty's architectural blunders. I'm such a fool

in matters of art that I honestly confess I do not dislike even the Sieges-Allee. I suppose it's my inherited Jewish respect for the kicks with which those swashbucklers exacted toll from us. *[Pause.]*

PROFESSOR

Belgium's not the only problem. We shall have to face an equally, if not more, difficult problem at home. Public opinion is extraordinarily docile. It swallows any patriotic balderdash just now, but there is a radical minority on the watch for its chance.

BALLIN

It's going strong in the north.

PROFESSOR

Yes, and in all movements of public opinion the swing of action and reaction makes it safe to count on the spreading of the view of a strong and emphatic minority who take diametrically the opposite view from that of the majority. The probability is that the ultimate view of public opinion will come to be nearer the at present most unpopular view.

BALLIN

Which view in your opinion is the view at present most unpopular?

PROFESSOR

I suppose it would be Liebknecht's. It was the same in England after the Boer War. Few English

writers have time to think before they write. If they take time to think, the public forgets or won't read them. Well, some of these superficial popular writers have supposed that the majority of the English elected the Khaki Parliament because they were against relieving the Unionist Government of responsibility. If I have read English history aright, that is not at all the way British public opinion works, and German public opinion is likely to follow in its footsteps.

BALLIN

Do you mean follow its example?

PROFESSOR

No, I distinguish between following an example and stepping the same way on similar ground.

BALLIN

Yes, I see; (*laughing*) "as on stones across a stream."

PROFESSOR

Well said, Ballin. That's just what I mean. Emphasis tends to arouse counter-emphasis, and the popular imagination is so sluggish that it takes its cue from any plausible emphatic prompter. Now, Liebknecht is a plausible fellow and he has the prestige of the man who grimly faces the Devil.

BALLIN

The Devil!

PROFESSOR

Yes, to face a vast and threatening multitude undaunted is facing the Devil. You are not likely to get nearer hell in this life or hereafter.

BALLIN

That's what we have to fear, you think. Have n't you a "penchant" towards these heretics, Professor?

PROFESSOR

No, Ballin, none. I think efficient middle-class government fulfils the highest aims of government, but I loathe all exaggeration and between exaggerations I prefer Liebknecht to brute force.

BALLIN

But he is alone — the one man who dares to express his view.

PROFESSOR

Pardon me — you don't know that. What you do know is, that he alone has had the courage to stand firm. While thousands upon thousands may have felt as he does — may have revolted against inhuman, uncharitable, narrow-minded oppression — none of them has had the fearless indifference to threats and public condemnation of this one frail man. His disciples have slipped away in the dark, and only a few women . . . There is nothing, however, so dangerous to the world's progress as the political visionary. There is logic, however

obscure, in the sequence of events, and the same law of causes and effects applies throughout all the things of this world, where everything is symbolical of everything else. But I say causes and effects because you cannot in the affairs of mankind isolate any or either. If you pick up red-hot embers, you know what will be the immediate consequence. If you lie across the rails when an express train is due, you know the risk. Visionaries always think the law of causes and effects so simple that it can be managed or be suspended like an act of Parliament. To decline the trouble of looking closely into lateral facts, and in order not to see all round to have one's eyes rivetted on particular points, is the sign of the visionary. Most of our so-called statesmen are visionaries without knowing it. This war is the work of visionaries who either were too lazy to think about it or too incapable of foreseeing and avoiding it or estimating its possible consequences. They are practically all of them what the French call *Simplistes*.

BALLIN

Yet the greatest statesmen have all had but one object in view and one way of accomplishing it. Look at Bismarck. He had one object — to create a German Empire — and one method of doing it — to raise a gigantic and powerful army and get there by force. He staked all and won all. Luck!

PROFESSOR

Yes, luck. Occasional successes are the curse of blindlings in power. Like gamblers they think they

must win. They think Fate can be dodged by trickery. Bismarck really deserved to fail. Moltke and his generals only won because their opponents were still more cocksure.

BALLIN

And Napoleon?

PROFESSOR

Napoleon was a great civilian, and, knowing at first very little about war as a whole, beat the wiseacres who thought it was a game with a code of rules which would be observed by the players. Napoleon would n't go out when his wickets were down, as the English would say. But he was beaten at Waterloo by a general far inferior to him, because he was too cocksure of winning and underestimated the dogged pertinacity of his enemy. We are having Napoleon's luck in the present war, and we are exposed to the same failure in the end. Germany has been intoxicated by her success and she will have her Waterloo in due course.

BALLIN

Good God! you don't think we shall be defeated!
... History never repeats itself.

PROFESSOR

History does repeat itself, but never in identical terms. Just think that all the piles of European music are variations of an octave. Yet the scale of human motives is ...

BALLIN

Goethe reduced them to thirty-six, did n't he?

PROFESSOR

So be it. The proportion is quite large enough. Her Waterloo will not be a decisive battle, but a decisive war.

BALLIN

It does n't look like it. We have proceeded from conquest to conquest since its beginning.

PROFESSOR

Conquests will be our undoing. They extend our lines and use up our men in the maintenance of occupation armies. If Italy joins the enemy, however, we shall have an advantage. Austria-Hungary will be able to utilise against Italy Slav troops she no longer dares, after their wholesale surrenders, to use against Russia.

BALLIN

That's true. I wonder if our diplomacy has thought of this.

PROFESSOR

Our diplomacy! Those well-bred officials . . .

BALLIN

Well, Bülow. He's a diplomatist!

PROFESSOR

Yes, Bülow, but that is because he knows Europe as a private person. Diplomatists should have special go-as-you-like missions from time to time to enable them to visit countries and know their people, like private persons. A diplomatist is a man who goes about with a danger warning on his well-brushed top hat. He is like the husband in the play, the last man to see the decoration sprouting from his own temples. The ignorance of statesmen about the social conditions of neighbouring countries is still more astonishing. It is now practically certain that the Russian Government did not mobilise against Germany, but against the strikes which were convulsing the country while that mischievous idiot Hartwig was encouraging the Serbians to defy and excite Austria-Hungary. We saved Russia from revolution by declaring war on her.

BALLIN

And perhaps saved ourselves!

PROFESSOR

You have said it. This war chimed with the needs of most governments. But it will have served the purpose of none — none, my dear Ballin, none. (*A pause.*) Its most likely consequence will be a social and anti-governmental upheaval throughout Europe. That's why it will be very difficult for governments to make peace, and the longer the war lasts the greater will be the difficulty. Revolution

is terribly contagious. Besides, war brings out the worst features of class government, the contrast between those who are giving their lives and those who are feathering their nests. You don't suppose the men at the front don't see it! On the contrary — quite the contrary. That's the coming danger, the really great danger, my friend. Bethmann has the official blindness for unorthodox facts and is jogging along on his regulation nag, making his daily rounds as if peace was as easy a proposition as war. Any idiot can destroy. It will take more brains than Bethmann and Hindenburg between them possess by a long way to plan out the foundations of the palace of peace. Besides, the repatriation of millions of citizens — the return to their homes of men who, after having risked their lives, . . . no, my dear fellow — no — changes, enormous social changes are impending. Social values all round will have to be readjusted and it's the classes will pay.

BALLIN

It's been a sad mistake.

PROFESSOR

It is always a mistake to turn the subsoil of social faith or tamper with the foundations of political institutions at all. Religion and political tradition are equally matters of faith. People have lost faith in their rulers.

BALLIN

And if they did n't deserve it?

PROFESSOR

They never have: that's why faith was necessary.

BALLIN

Yes, you are . . . ah! [Door thrown open.

Enter the KAISER hurriedly.

KAISER

Glad to see you. (*Irritably.*) Where the devil's Etting?

VON ETTING (*hurrying in from side door*)
Not far off, Sir. I was asleep.

KAISER

Asleep! What did you do all night?

VON ETTING

Spent five hours at the station at Potsdam waiting for the early express.

KAISER

My poor Etting! You might have been put up at Potsdam. I'm dead tired myself.

[*Sitting at desk, touching button and taking up the receiver.*

Is that you, Bethmann? I have just arrived. What news of Italy? What? Declared war against Austria-Hungary only. Come. Yes, come. Yes, come at once. (*Rises like one in a dream. Sinks into an armchair. Sits staring at vacancy. Silent pause.*) Against Austria-Hungary only!

[*The KAISER rises in silence and walks out.*

PROFESSOR

It's a terrible blow to His Majesty. He has never taken the Italians seriously — thought them always spoilt children who would bluster and bully till he took down the whip.

BALLIN

We are up against awful odds, Professor. I see no issue — nothing but humiliation. It's been a colossal mistake, from first to last.

PROFESSOR

We are all pygmies, Ballin. And while the machine has grown in size and complication, the human soul has remained stationary, where it has not degenerated. We are like that human photograph which was in vogue a few years ago — a photograph of superposed photographs of men — in which a blurred image was supposed to represent a type. We are just that blurred type. Artificial selection by standards of examination has produced regiments of the same soulless beings, all possessing the same knowledge, all taught to have the same tastes and ambitions and to take the same view of life and things. The individual soul has been merged in a blurred soul as the individual physique is merged in the blurred photograph.

BALLIN

Yes, there are no great men in politics. We are governed by men of merely average minds.

PROFESSOR

But there are no great minds on any subject.

BALLIN

Pardon me — in industry.

[*The PROFESSOR surprised.*

Yes, Professor. Just because there is no stand-
ardising of the mind in industry it has gone for-
ward.

PROFESSOR

Perhaps — and the appreciation of science by
industrials has encouraged scientific research.

Enter the CHANCELLOR.

CHANCELLOR

His Majesty is taking a rest. Schultze condemns
him to isolation till to-morrow.

PROFESSOR

He must feel the Italian defection terribly.

CHANCELLOR

No, His Majesty takes it quite cheerfully.
They've declared war only against Austria-Hun-
gary, you see. (*Reflecting.*) The despatch from
Bülow has been deciphered. It is all right as re-
gards Germany.

BALLIN

How can they be at war with Austria-Hungary
and at peace with us?

PROFESSOR

Machiavellian conjuring, my dear Ballin. The “heads-I-win-tails-you-lose” trick. Bülow will choose the coin, you may be sure. There’s such a thing as being too clever.

CHANCELLOR

All the same it means an enemy the more.
(*Pause.*) Ballin, Professor, do you realise that Germany’s bleeding to death . . .

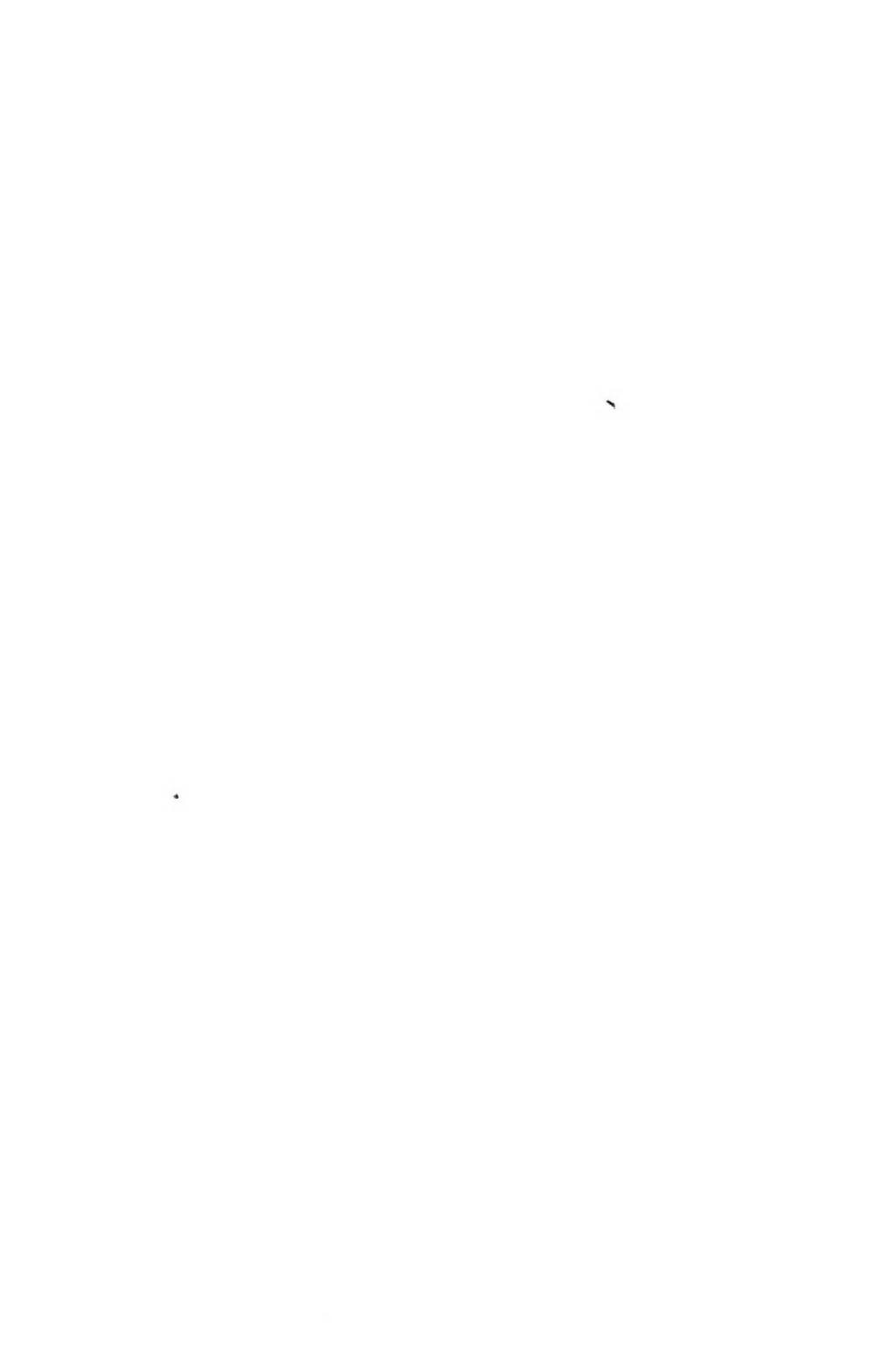
[All three standing in contemplation; then the
CHANCELLOR *exit.*

PROFESSOR

What a tangle! Good God, what a tangle!

[Light their cigars, exeunt

CURTAIN



PART III
IN GREMIO DEORUM
(*BERLIN, 19—*)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PART III

THE KAISER.

THE KAISERIN.

DR. KAEMPF, *President of the Reichstag.*

DR. LIEBKNECHT, *Member of the Reichstag.*

HERR BALLIN, *General Manager of the Hamburg-Amerika Steamship Company.*

THE PROFESSOR.

HERR VON ETTING, *Private Secretary to the KAISER.*

PRINCE VON BÜLOW, *who has been appointed Imperial Chancellor after several attempts to get along without him.*

NURSE NELSON, *widow of an American German, who has resumed her Anglo-Saxon name.*

COURT CHAMBERLAIN.

GEHEIMRATH VON SCHULTZE, *Royal Physician.*

MEMBERS OF THE REICHSTAG, OFFICERS, POLICE,
AND NUMEROUS LAY FIGURES.

PART III IN GREMIO DEORUM

ACT I

SCENE I

Hospital in Berlin, very much like an Anglo-Saxon military hospital — rows of beds; men with legs raised on their beds smoking cigarettes; flowers; nurses, smart and lively, moving noiselessly about and attending to patients in different ways.

NURSE NELSON, *American, speaking with an English wounded prisoner.*

NURSE NELSON

Well, now it's out, do you feel better?

ENGLISH PRISONER

Feels the same still, but that'll pass off. You always feel a wound for a time, you know.

NURSE NELSON

I ought to know. I went through two Balkan wars. My — it was a time!

ENGLISH PRISONER (*maliciously*)

Do you mean a good time?

NURSE NELSON

Depends. Worse wounds than any I have seen here. The bad surgery accounted for a good deal, of course. It was a good time because we were so close to human suffering, and for a nurse, the more useful she feels herself, the better she likes it. Now you know what a good time for a nurse means, you wicked man.

ENGLISH PRISONER

I know. Good Lord! don't I know! This is my third knockover, and now I've boxed the compass by coming to this blessed place as a prisoner to be treated by a . . .

NURSE NELSON

Well — no, not an Englishwoman.

ENGLISH PRISONER

By an Anglo-Saxon. By the by, what brought you here?

NURSE NELSON

Love!

ENGLISH PRISONER

Love?

NURSE NELSON

Love of adventure. Don't be so inquisitive. Yes, love of a man, too. I was married to a German.

ENGLISH PRISONER

So you like these blighters?

NURSE NELSON

Some, yes.

ENGLISH PRISONER

Well, I suppose some of 'em are right enough. Tell me what has been going on since I fell — that is three weeks ago. I am allowed to talk and be talked to now, you know.

NURSE NELSON

I am not supposed to give news to prisoners. Besides, I am under observation since America came in, you may be sure. But I'll tell you, all the same, if you're good and don't get too restless and shift your bandages. Germany's in a terrible way. They're running short of ammunition and men too, and Berlin's full of sedition (*glancing round her and lowering her voice*) and the working classes are all up against going on with the war and are demonstrating against it daily. (*Nurse passing.*) You know you ought not to be in this ward at all. It was some mistake.

ENGLISH PRISONER

Probably on account of my name being Zim-
mermann.

NURSE NELSON

No wonder. They could n't realise that a Zim-
mermann was a prisoner. Are n't you a German?

ENGLISH PRISONER

My father was, but I hate the Germans. — At least, I hate Germany — I mean their Government — No, perhaps I ought rather to say the beasts who brought on the war. You are of German origin too, I suppose.

NURSE NELSON

No, I'm really Scotch, but born in America.

ENGLISH PRISONER

How absurd international hatred is. Here am I fighting against my father's sister's children and you a Scotchwoman tending my wounds in the enemy's country — both of us much more attached to the place of our up-bringing than affected by political allegiance or birth.

NURSE NELSON

You don't speak like a Tommy, now.

ENGLISH PRISONER

Well, if you want to know, I am an Oxford man and a barrister and joined the London Scottish.

NURSE NELSON (*eagerly*)

Then you are Scotch too?

ENGLISH PRISONER

No, not necessarily, though my mother is.

NURSE NELSON

Well, that's enough. In America, if you only

have a Scotch great-grandmother, you belong to Scotland and keep St. Andrew's day. It's like royal blood in your veins. (*Laughs.*)

ENGLISH PRISONER

I wish all these blessed politicians could be shunted to the Falkland Islands. It's the politicians have made the war, and all of us have been fighting and killed and wounded because they are incompetent to deal with anything complicated. I love my own profession, but I see the superiority of a careful business man or manufacturer or engineer. They think before they act. Politicians act first and find excuses afterwards, and lawyers don't care much about essentials — they enjoy the sport of winning, right or wrong.

*[Doors thrown open. A lady in black enters.
Saluting and curtseying.*

Who's that?

NURSE NELSON (*standing at attention*)
The Empress!

ENGLISH PRISONER

I hope she's brought cigarettes.

NURSE NELSON

She always leaves several boxes. All the flowers are from her. She's an angel to the hospitals.

*[The KAISERIN moves round from bed to bed,
conversing pleasantly with the wounded and
nurses. Here and there a laugh. Eventually
she reaches the ENGLISH PRISONER'S bed.*

MATRON (*rather severely*)

This man, Your Majesty, is a prisoner. He was badly wounded in four places.

KAISERIN

Vous êtes Français, Monsieur ?

ENGLISH PRISONER

No, Madam, I am an Englishman.

MATRON (*severely*)

His name is Zimmermann.

KAISERIN

That's not an English name.

ENGLISH PRISONER

My father was German and my mother is Scotch, and I was born in England, and I have fought for my country and been thrice wounded in her service.

KAISERIN

But if your father is German, you don't think us all such ogres as we are represented, do you?

ENGLISH PRISONER

No, Ma'am, I know that all Germans are nothing of the kind and that this war would never have taken place if men had known each other better.

KAISERIN

Where is your father?

ENGLISH PRISONER

My father is a naturalised Englishman, but a suspect. I don't blame the authorities, who can't make distinctions, but he is more English than I am.

KAISERIN

Why do so many Germans love England?

ENGLISH PRISONER (*with energy and making an effort to rise, and falling back*)

Because she is lovable.

KAISERIN

You have excited yourself too much in talking with me. But before I go, tell me what do you mean by "lovable"?

ENGLISH PRISONER

She is like Your Majesty. Her large, warm, mother's heart beats in harmony with all her subjects and has even tenderness to spare for others.

[*The KAISERIN gives him her hand, which he raises to his lips. She passes on in silence.*

NURSE NELSON

Is n't she a daisy, as we say?

ENGLISH PRISONER

She seems a good sort.

NURSE NELSON

How fearfully prosaic! Why, you spoke of her heart so beautifully and poetically that you went straight to it.

ENGLISH PRISONER

Of England's heart, you mean.

NURSE NELSON

She knows nothing of England's heart. Hers beats within her. But you said more than you understood, young man. And that touched her, too, the more so because she saw you were not capable of realising its depth. Her Majesty's heart does beat with all her subjects, but His Majesty's Government has no heart for half of them. The Poles, the Alsatians, the Schleswigers, practically the whole artisan and working class of Germany — most of the thinking population — are regarded by the Kaiser's Government as enemies, and Germany, the great mother, is still unborn. When you said that of England, you may have opened Her Majesty's eyes to the greatest fact of the present age. England is a motherland, Germany is merely a fatherland, a guardian with as much motherliness in it as a public company.

ENGLISH PRISONER

Upon my soul — it is good to hear you talk. My father was a friend of old Liebknecht. He was a young revolutionary refugee in Paris in 1870, and though he would not fight against Germany, he

fought with the Commune against the Versaillais and fled to England, where he has lived ever since. He is known to literature under a pseudonym. He could have returned to Germany, but the great mother, England, had received him to her bosom in his trouble. There he found safety from persecution, — freedom, — not a gesticulating deity, but the warm, tender comfort of being let alone. That's why he loves her and why I love her. Only those who know something else can understand such goodness in itself. You understand it because you have . . .

NURSE NELSON

Stop! You are talking too much. I must go to other patients now. But great events are impending. You spoke of Liebknecht. His son is in danger of his life. The Government thought that ideas could be locked up, and kept him in prison for months, but he is out again. On the slightest excuse, the Government would try him for high treason and have him shot. He is immensely popular and goes his own way, defying the Government. This country is ripening for revolution. If they don't get peace shortly, there will be — you know what I mean.

ENGLISH PRISONER

Are you a revolutionary too?

NURSE NELSON

My mother was an Irish patriot.

ENGLISH PRISONER

I suppose you mean that to explain everything,

NURSE NELSON

It does a lot, does n't it? By the by, are you married?

ENGLISH PRISONER

No, I am still a sporting chance.

NURSE NELSON (*laughing*)

In spite of your shortened leg! Now, be quiet or I shall be reprimanded for impropriety and you turned into a prisoners' ward. Be a good boy and go to sleep.

[*Moves away. The ENGLISH PRISONER pulls a shade over his eyes.*

CURTAIN

SCENE II

A lofty Bier-Halle in Berlin, packed with men and a sprinkling of women; small tables, beer-tankards, long pipes, short pipes, cigars, a few cigarettes; platform to right; constables at long table with reporters, some constables facing platform, others audience; high reading-desk, table for Chairman, and a few chairs on platform.

Hum of subdued conversation — a note of restless expectation and excitement.

FIRST CITIZEN

It's shameful.

SECOND CITIZEN

What's shameful?

FIRST CITIZEN

Using the police to stifle public opinion.

SECOND CITIZEN

They've been doing that since the war began. The world's gagged. I've just heard from New York that it's as bad there — not a song can be sung in a music-hall without the consent of the police. It's not militarism that's the curse of the world, it's the present generation's own damned stupidity that stands this sort of thing.

FIRST CITIZEN

What can you expect of a system that tries to reduce everybody to the same low level? The only sensible political philosophy is anarchism — the removal of fetters to free development.

SECOND CITIZEN

The present generation's too stupid to appreciate freedom. They clamour for the State as if it were a medicine-man, and when they've got a bottle of something with a label on it they feel better. All their so-called progress is only exchanging one evil or one delusion for another.

FIRST CITIZEN

With all our vaunted civilisation we have reverted intellectually to the hand-to-mouth stage.

Only it's on such a gigantic scale that we can't get it into a panorama. Look at this War — we dash into it as if we were cutting into cake, with no more attempt to grasp its meaning than if we were women at a tea-fight (*Kaffee-Klatsch*), and now we are clamouring for peace in just . . .

[Noise at the back; everybody rises to see what it is.]

Uninvited guests!

SECOND CITIZEN (*looking at his watch*)

High time they began!

[Noise continues; some person invisible to the audience speaking in background. Hushing and silence.]

“Gentlemen, I should be glad to admit you, but this meeting is under the supervision of the police, and admissions are by invitation only. If you persist in trying to force an entrance I must hand over the doors to the police officer.”

*[Noise — cries of “Shameful!” “Police to the devil!” “Down with the police!” Constables sit stolid and observant at table. Outside a shot is fired; then follow several. A muscular, commanding voice shouts, “Close the doors!” (*Thür zu!*) Closing of doors.]*

FIRST CITIZEN

We are in a rat-trap.

[Firing outside, screams of women, and shouts of command and defiance. Then a thunder-

ing volley ; screams and yells growing less and less until silence.

[*The muscular, commanding voice: "Gentlemen, you can proceed with your meeting."*]

The prelude's taken the stomach out of it.

[*Door at side of platform opens and three men in frock coats enter. The CHAIRMAN at table pours out glass of water. Others take seats on either side.*]

CHAIRMAN

Gentlemen — We are met here to-night under somewhat exceptional circumstances. Public meetings, as you know, are forbidden. This is not a public meeting and, as you may have observed, it is under the protection of the police (*a titter*).

[*Constables look round to discover the author of the unseemly interruption.*]

I beg the audience to remain calm and to remember that we owe the privilege of meeting at all to the intervention of His Majesty. We should also remember that the police are only performing their duty, and I feel sure their duty is often as unpleasant to them as it is . . . [Noise and a pause.]

[*Burly police officer walks up the middle passage to the table and addresses the CHAIRMAN, rather short of breath.*]

POLICE OFFICER

I respectfully request the Chairman not to refer to the police. Compliments are as misplaced as criticism. We have our orders, and so long as you behave yourselves properly you may proceed.

[*General indignation.*]

FIRST CITIZEN

The impertinence!

CHAIRMAN

Gentlemen, you have heard the polite and considerate intimation of the gentleman in command of this hall. (*A titter — same movement.*) You have also heard the echo of feelings outside the hall. (*A groan — same movement.*) They had a certain eloquence. In fact they spat out the gag. (*Turning to officer.*) I beg your honour's pardon. And, well, gentlemen, I stop. You have come to hear our friend Deputy Dr. Liebknecht, and not me, and to him I yield the floor.

[“*Hear, hear,*” and rumbling of feet. Gentleman on right of the CHAIRMAN rises; clapping of hands and rumbling of feet; takes a manuscript from his pocket and spreads it out on reading-desk; clears his voice.

POLICE OFFICER (*rising*)

Mr. Chairman, I must ask you to forbid all cheering and manifestations of opinion. Such are my orders.

DR. LIEBKNECHT

Gentlemen, the Chairman has told you that it is by the Kaiser's express leave that we are able to hold a meeting at all. I do not thank him for granting us what he ought to have no right to withhold, but I take his consent as evidence that the scales

are falling from the eyes of authority and that a better time is coming.

The internal government of peoples is no longer a purely internal question. It may have the gravest consequences for other nations. The French revolutionary philosophers were right. Revolution — a revolution against autocracy is not a mere revolt — it is a crusade.

POLICE OFFICER

I cannot allow “revolution” to be spoken about as a crusade.

DR. LIEBKNECHT

If the officer were less hasty, he would have let me explain before he interrupted me. My father of blessed memory called Socialism an “Evangelium.” I regard it as such. It is the consolation of the poor and the downtrodden, of the wreckage of mankind, of the flotsam and jetsam of society, of those to whom, in mind or in body, Nature has been ungenerous. It is the good time coming for those who lie stranded in the hospitals of life — of the wounded in life’s battle. It is the word of good cheer, and what is the word of God but the word of good cheer, the smile of that greatest nurse of mankind — hope — hope, if not in this life, hope for our children and generations to come? And what I am saying to you to-day is only what my father said before me. In me he lives, and in your children and your children’s children will you live. The dawn is on the horizon, we discern it through

the mists left by the long night from which the sunlight is just emerging. We appeal across these mists to suffering mankind.

I am forbidden to speak of how the rulers of the earth are fulfilling their trust.

POLICE OFFICER

Will the speaker please confine himself to his "Evangelium"? (Smiling.) (*Murmurs; the word "insolence" (Frechheit) is heard.*) I cannot allow any manifestation of opinion, any applause, or the contrary. If repeated it will be followed by immediate evacuation of the hall. Such are my orders.

CHAIRMAN

The officer has to obey his orders, however insensate they may be.

[POLICE OFFICER *rises indignantly, but sits down again.*]

DR. LIEBKNECHT

Not to speak of the War implies silence about Peace. All, therefore, I can say is that we, the Socialists of Germany, who have not surrendered to Cæsar (*the POLICE OFFICER jumps to his feet, but sits down again*), hold out our hands to the Socialists of the world and declare (*with vehemence*) our loathing for a war . . .

POLICE OFFICER

Stop, sir!

DR. LIEBKNECHT (*shouting him down*)

... a war forced on mankind by a malignant gang of miscreants on grounds as contemptible as they are criminal.

[*All the audience on their feet, cheering frantically.*

POLICE OFFICER (*bawling*)

Clear the hall!

[*Police, formed into a line with drawn pistols, gradually move the audience back to the doors.*

(To DR. LIEBKNECHT, *sarcastically*.) Sorry, sir, to disturb so pleasant a gathering. My orders. If you and the Chairman and the other gentlemen go out quietly by the back door you will escape me.

DR. LIEBKNECHT

I don't want to escape you. I am at your disposal.

POLICE OFFICER

Don't be a fool!

[*Joining his men.*

CURTAIN

ACT II

The KAISER's study at Schloss, Berlin, as in Part I, Act III. VON ETTING at telephone with receiver at his ear, looking very impatient.

VON ETTING

Yes, Headquarters. Excellency von Etting, yes. Is that you, Field-Marshal? All right, thanks. His Majesty wishes to know if you propose to evacuate Cologne. (Pause.) Düsseldorf and Duisburg already! Good God! (Listening.) Essen! (Almost shouting.) . . . Yes, a couple of hundred thousand Japanese. We shall need all we've got on that side. Berlin is seething with revolution. Yes, we had to shoot two hundred of them. The rest sent back to the Front. What can you spare? Not ten thousand. Yes, see what you can do. Good luck to you.

[Puts down receiver. Ring. Takes up receiver again.]

His Majesty is going to receive them here. Who's the President of the Reichstag — oh, yes, that bounder Kaempf; and how many? Some dozen or so. Deputation of Liberal leaders. Wait a moment, let me make a note. (Passes receiver to other ear and writes while still holding it.) All right, when you like.

[Puts down receiver and hurries out.]

[A pause.]

Enter COURT CHAMBERLAIN with a large sheet of paper in his hand and takes a look round, pushes

chairs out of the way to make plenty of standing room, consults paper leisurely, and exit.

[*Pause. Voices.*

Enter DR. KAEMPF, with COURT CHAMBERLAIN, followed by a number of members of the Reichstag in swallowtails, white gloves, and white ties. COURT CHAMBERLAIN arranges them, with list in hand, according to alphabetical order. Inaudible subdued remarks of COURT CHAMBERLAIN to each. Smiles. Handshaking in some cases.

[*Exit COURT CHAMBERLAIN. Pause.*

[*Doors thrown open. HALBARDIERS enter and place themselves at either side of doorway.*

Enter COURT CHAMBERLAIN.

COURT CHAMBERLAIN (*in official voice*)

Gentlemen! His Majesty!

Enter the KAISER.

[*Exeunt HALBARDIERS.*

KAISER

Gentlemen, your President, Dr. Kaempf, has been good enough to inform me that you wished to present me an address. It has given me pleasure to grant you an audience for this purpose, and I bid you welcome.

DR. KAEMPF

I beg to present to Your Majesty my colleagues of the Reichstag who are present, a list of whom His Excellency the Court Chamberlain, I am informed, submitted beforehand for Your Majesty's

approval. Your Majesty objected to the presence of two of our colleagues. May I humbly request Your Majesty to tell their colleagues here present why Your Majesty objected to their forming part of the deputation. I beg to add that they were duly elected by the political group to which they belong, and the group to which they belong will expect an explanation, which, I trust, Your Majesty will enable me to give.

KAISER

Mr. President Kaempf, it is not for a Sovereign to give any explanation. To the two gentlemen in question I had the gravest objection. That ought to suffice.

DR. KAEMPF

I am afraid it does not, Sir. The Reichstag represents the German people.

KAISER

No, Sir, I represent the German people. The Reichstag is merely my adviser.

DR. KAEMPF

With all deference to Your Majesty, the question of the true position of Sovereign and Parliament has long since been settled in the Home of Parliaments, and both in France and in Germany, as in other Parliamentary countries, the Parliamentary system has been borrowed from England, and is subject to the principles and privileges which attend and surround the institution in that country.

KAISER (*with a slightly contemptuous smile*)
A sort of apostolic succession.

DR. KAEMPF

If Your Majesty pleases.

KAISER

And if I decline to give you any reason, do you propose to send me to the guillotine? (*Looks steadily at Dr. KAEMPF.*) (*A pause.*) My dear President, I am no Louis Capet, and this *Schloss* is not yet invaded by the Berlin *canaille*. Take a friend's advice, and drop dictation. (*Pause.*) Let us proceed to the matter in hand.

DR. KAEMPF

Your Majesty knows I make no pretence of having any power of coercion, but I would humbly point out to Your Majesty that the Reichstag is in no mood to allow any discussion as to its supremacy.

KAISER (*startled*)

Supremacy!

DR. KAEMPF

Yes, Sir, the word I have used is the one which was used at yesterday's council of the leaders. The Reichstag intends to be supreme.

KAISER

And pray, Sir, how is the Reichstag going to materialise its supremacy against the physical

force which is under my command and obeys my orders? My dear President, you are threatening me with civil war, and exposing the leaders to a *coup d'état*.

DR. KAEMPF (*drawing himself up and turning to his colleagues*)

Gentlemen, His Majesty's last words I think we must regard as a dismissal.

KAISER

Gentlemen, your President has an emphatic way of putting his point which exposes him to the answer I have given him. Now, what I suppose he wished me to understand is that the Reichstag is displeased with the course the War has taken, has come to think that if a declaration of war, under the German Constitution, had been subject to the approval of Parliament, as in France, the Reichstag would probably have had a majority against it. Perhaps, gentlemen, you are right, and so far as that is concerned I should have been glad to have been restrained by such a provision; but you are not unaware that in the Home of Parliaments war was declared against Germany without the consent of Parliament.

DR. KAEMPF

But by a Committee of Parliament.

KAISER

How a Committee of Parliament?

DR. KAEMPF

By a Government chosen from among the members of the Parliament and responsible to it.

KAISER

Then is that the point on which you wish to hear my commands?

DR. KAEMPF

Our object, Sir, is humbly to request you, Sir, to grant your people two changes in the Imperial Constitution. The one is that no member of the Cabinet shall be chosen outside the Reichstag or the Bundesrath, that the majority of the Cabinet shall in all cases belong to the Reichstag, and that this shall apply to the Imperial Chancellor, who shall continue, as hitherto, to be President of the Cabinet and Prime Minister, choosing his colleagues from the two legislative houses exclusively.

KAISER

Gentlemen, I will consider the matter. Have you any other proposal?

DR. KAEMPF

No, Sir, not at present. I beg Your Majesty to regard this deputation as the expression of the entire liberalism of the Reichstag, and therefore of the country. We represent, with the Social Democrats, a large majority of Your Majesty's subjects, and hope that Your Majesty, who has always been regarded by German Liberals as in sympathy with

liberal ideas and progressive legislation, will appreciate this step on our part as necessary for the protection of generations of Germans to come.

[Stepping back to the middle of the deputation.]

[A pause, during which the EMPEROR puts his hand to his eyes and stands for a few moments in silence.]

KAISER

Gentlemen, I have been a Liberal all my life. Every act in my career has been an act of liberalism. If I have fought Socialism, it is because I regard it as subversive of every principle of righteous conduct, human and divine. It proposes to apply general and artificial injustice as a remedy for the cruelties of Nature. To prevent a thousand men from using their limbs in order to console one who has none would be just about as sensible as the equalising system of Socialism. I have fought trade-unionism for the same reason. But if I have fought the levelling process at the foot, I have fought privilege at the top. I have fought the universities and the so-called Intellectuals, who have tried to typify German culture. You know how, in the face of discouraging prophecy and even insult, I fought the battle of science against philosophy and learning; how I succeeded in raising the polytechnics of Germany to their present transcendent position; how I have encouraged scientific research; how, in the teeth of the Senatuses of our universities, of officialdom, and all the silly routine of German old-fogeyism, I placed Profes-

sor Wilhelm von Jasmar at the head of the greatest chemical institute the world has ever seen. Nor do you forget it is I who persuaded the rich men of Germany to subscribe the largest sums ever collected for educational purposes. Nor have you forgotten the howl of the intellectual wolves who thought their loyal services made them the equals of genius.

I have always sought to put the right man in the right place. What was Jasmar doing when I took him by the hand? He was earning a precarious livelihood by odd jobs — he, our greatest chemist, doing work any public water-inspector could do, jeopardising even his scientific reputation because he had to earn private fees for a living. Gentlemen, it was a disgrace to the country, and I thank God that I had the initiative to see that he was as much a part of our national wealth as our mineral resources. If we had been like the English, we should have sterilised Jasmar in some post where any fool would have done just as well. (*With emphasis.*) Chemistry, gentlemen, has made Germany. I am going to found a new vast chemical institute. The cost of one of our useless dreadnoughts will pay for it. Another Jasmar shall be the head of it, and we'll conquer the whole world again with chemistry. Chemistry, as much as electricity, is a weapon of the future. And don't think, gentlemen, that I mean weapons of war. I mean the peaceful weapons with which German trade and German industry and German science had gained their ascendancy before the War.

We have been accused of being a nation of spies. Gentlemen, every man who crosses the national frontier should be a spy for knowledge if he is a genuine patriot. And I intend to develop the Geographical Institute at Gotha into a still more efficient centralisation of geographical knowledge of every kind. The miniature of the whole world shall be reproduced there, and every German shall be proud to see his mite of knowledge duly classed and reproduced on maps ten times more vast and more useful than even at present. The English are promising themselves a geographical institute, but we are thousands of miles ahead of them already, and, generous as the English are to hospitals and charities, they are the most niggardly people on the face of the earth when the endowment of research is concerned, and yet, gentlemen, what can charity do alongside the immensity of the social ramifications benefited by additions to science and discovery?

There are many men in this land of ours still vegetating in the struggle for life who are capable of rendering transcendent service to their country. I shall drag them out of their holes. For, gentlemen, the genius of a nation is its greatest asset. We must seek for it as we seek for its mines. Germany's ideal has hitherto been a cornfield in which the minimum of root and maximum of ear are achieved by artificial and scientific methods. You can't raise genius in rows and furrows. I see that now, and that the rooting out of the tares may be the destruction of what is the most precious of its growths.

If I have dwelt on these projects for the future, it is because I wish you, gentlemen, to see that I can speak in the same frank spirit to you as you have done to me. We have a joint trust to fulfil and a joint task to perform. We must put our heads together and see how we can best fulfil and perform them.

I thank you for your suggestions respecting the Constitution. May I ask if you have them in writing?

[The COURT CHAMBERLAIN touches a button on the wall. DR. KAEMPF, stepping forward, hands the KAISER a scroll tied in black silk ribbon. The KAISER takes it and, bowing to DR. KAEMPF and the deputation, turns; the doors are thrown open, the HAL-BARDIERS take up their posts on either side, and the KAISER walks out.]

COURT CHAMBERLAIN

Gentlemen, you will find refreshments and cigars in the adjoining room.

[Most of the deputation follow the COURT CHAMBERLAIN. DR. KAEMPF and two members remain behind.]

DR. KAEMPF

I don't know what to think. We shall have to issue some statement. His Majesty is quite unconscious of the danger. He can't understand that his subjects should want something besides prosperity, a good administration, and clean streets. He does not realise that his old professional army is prac-

tically gone, and that the army now in the field is one of citizen officers, who can't be counted on to shoot down their fellow-citizens.

FIRST MEMBER OF REICHSTAG

He made a tactical mistake in striking out the Social-Democrat names.

[Nods of assent — a pause.]

DR. KAEMPF

I don't expect His Majesty to yield, anyhow, till things are worse. (*Distant cadenced shouts.*) What's that? (*Listening — shots — then a volley.*)

SECOND MEMBER OF REICHSTAG

It's the Elberfelder — Good God!

[All pour from the adjoining room and rush to the door.]

Enter OFFICER and four soldiers.

OFFICER

Gentlemen, you are under arrest.

DR. KAEMPF

But we are immune from arrest.

OFFICER

I can't help my orders, Sir. In the adjoining room you will await His Majesty's pleasure.

[All file back into the adjoining room. The officer turns the key, and, followed by his men, goes out himself.]

CURTAIN

ACT III

KAISER's *study*. VON ETTING, *The PROFESSOR*.

Enter BALLIN.

PROFESSOR

Well, what is the crowd like?

BALLIN

Difficult to say. I am going back in a few minutes. What's the programme?

VON ETTING

His Majesty has prepared a speech. The Professor knows more about it than I do. I'm maid-of-all-work, you know.

BALLIN

Anyhow, the slaughter is going to stop.

PROFESSOR

Yes, but now the real war begins — the war of brains against brains. Hitherto we have had a mere war of the brute in man. The brute has failed, as the brute has always failed to do more than eat and drink and destroy. It is not the brute in man which has added aught to the progress and thought and beauty of the world. His work has been uniformly destruction. What has the war to show as its

achievement? Nothing but the charred remains of the achievements of artists and builders, the broken hearts of women, bereaved families of fatherless children. Glory! What glory is there in such an achievement as that? Compare with it the masterpieces of human genius destroyed. And now the brute in man is to subside for a time, and the war of wits is to begin. And whether the ignorant blindlings, ambitious politicians, and unscrupulous adventurers who engineered the War have obtained satisfaction or not, the real war, the war which is to emancipate Europe for a time from their manœuvres, now begins. It is round the green baize that the fate of nations and peoples will be decided, and all the War will have been in vain.

BALLIN

Yes; yet the great shipping companies have to cut rates and do other acts of hostility before they settle down to a conference.

PROFESSOR

That's what France and the United States and Italy and Switzerland did with their customs duties, till they came to terms. But even that was only because they were not wise enough to count the cost. (*Emphatically.*) But they did not sink each other's ships and destroy ten millions of the youth of the world.

BALLIN

Oh, I am not defending war of any kind, even tariff war — so you need n't be so emphatic.

PROFESSOR

The war of wits may take almost as long as the brute war, and I believe will be nearly as futile, because there are too many conflicting interests for all of them to receive satisfaction.

BALLIN

That's what Bülow has said all along.

PROFESSOR

His Majesty never appreciated Bülow till now, because they are the distance of the poles asunder. The one is as impatient and impetuous as the other is cautious and cold-blooded.

VON ETTING

A wonderful change has come over His Majesty. If you want to go back into the crowd, gentlemen, you had better go at once. As soon as it reaches certain dimensions, the gates will be closed.

[Exeunt the PROFESSOR and BALLIN, saluting. Noises in the streets, increasing shouts, shrill voices of women, and more shouting.
VON ETTING closes the shutters in haste.

Enter the KAISER.

KAISER

Why have you closed the shutters?

VON ETTING

I thought Your Majesty would prefer not to hear.

KAISER

Quite the contrary, Etting. Fetch Her Majesty.

[Exit VON ETTING. *The KAISER walks up and down the room, and takes out a scroll and looks at it from time to time. It is apparent he is memorising a speech. Enter the KAISERIN followed by VON ETTING. The KAISER kisses her hand.*

I sent for you to hear the speech I am going to deliver from the balcony.

KAISERIN

Oh, William, you can't go on to the balcony with that angry crowd below!

KAISER

My mind's made up. Etting, is the Chancellor downstairs?

VON ETTING

Yes, Sir.

KAISER

Tell him I want to see him at once.

[Exit VON ETTING.

I want him to read you my speech before I deliver it. I may tell you, dear, he and the Professor have advised me to make it. The Professor wrote it out — I can't write. My hand trembles as if it were the palsied fist of an old man. The responsibility has been too great for me. Besides, I can only exist in fresh air now.

[Opening the shutters and windows wide. Noise again becomes audible. Shouts and shrill voices.

Enter the CHANCELLOR.

Bülow, read the speech to the Kaiserin.

KAISERIN

Don't you think Willie ought to hear it?

KAISER

Yes, quite right. Where is he? Etting, telephone!
[VON ETTING takes receiver.

VON ETTING

Excellency von Etting. His Imperial Highness
gone out in plain clothes? Where? Don't know?

KAISERIN

Oh, William, I hope there's nothing wrong!

KAISER

Probably on his way here. He could n't have
gone into the crowd in uniform. The police know
him all right. Etting, go and enquire. (*Exit VON*
ETTING.) What sort of crowd is it, Bülow?

CHANCELLOR

Threatening, but unarmed, and the guard and
the police are all loyal. I have had all the other
troops sent out of town. So there is no danger of
bloodshed.

Enter VON ETTING.

KAISER

Well?

VON ETTING

His Imperial Highness has not been seen at any of the entrances.

KAISER

Well, read it, Bülow, and it can be read to the Crown Prince again when he does come.

CHANCELLOR (*reads*)

“When I last addressed you from this balcony I said that if our enemies forced Germany to draw the sword it would not be returned to its scabbard without honour.

“The hour of destiny struck. Germany drew the sword, and if we are now sheathing it, we are doing so without any abatement of our glory. Germany has seen ranged against her, one after another, all the Powers of the earth, and without wavering she has fought against these ever-increasing odds.

“We are not beaten. Yet we are farther than ever from victory.

“This war has been a gigantic object-lesson in the futility of war. We have experimented with every conceivable engine of destruction. We have tried every available method of intimidation. We have climbed into the highest reaches of the air and descended into the bowels of the earth to destroy and to daunt. We have wrought havoc from the unseen depths of the ocean. Thousands of innocent lives and harmless ships have been

sacrificed — and all this frantic endeavour of the mental and physical forces of a nation has only had the effect of passing novelty. Equally effective counter-effort has uniformly foiled us, and all our engines of slaughter and devastation have only served as steps towards more effective effort on both sides. Intimidation has only added to the number of our enemies and, as for our submarine warfare, it has collapsed, outraced by the enemy's shipyards, amid the loathing of the brave men who have had to carry it on and the ridicule of the world.

“War is bankrupt. War can no longer adjust the differences of mankind. Science has placed in the hands of friends and foes alike the same means of destruction.

“Why, then, continue this bloodshed, which can lead to nothing but further bloodshed till all the youth of Germany is dead, wounded, or prisoner in the hands and lands of our enemies?

“Germany has gone through a terrible trial, but she has come out of it showing that the vast majority of the nation have the political wisdom in time of trial necessary for self-government. The nation needs that self-government to toughen still more the bonds of union this War has forged. I have granted it to my faithful subjects, and now it will be for the whole nation to advise me through its constitutional representatives whether this country shall have peace or continue the struggle. It is a stupendous responsibility. I dare not face

it alone, and I am thankful to my Ministers and my Parliament that they are willing to share it with me.

“Germany will resume her civilian life a wiser nation, and therefore a better and a greater one. She has paid for her wisdom, and the stout hearts of her citizens will do the rest.

“At the outbreak of the War I sent you to your churches to pray for our gallant armies. I now ask you to pray for peace, a peace for centuries to come, a peace not only between nations, but a peace which will secure us against bitterness of political faction and strife within the boundaries of this fair land.

“May God’s blessing attend you and me in this new endeavour to promote the cause of right and justice, and to secure the emancipation of humanity from the curses of international hatred, unscrupulous ambitions, and the ill-fated delusion that war can ever be but the sanction of crimes against God and God’s creation.”

KAISER

Well, is that all right?

CHANCELLOR

I think, with Her Majesty, that His Imperial Highness should know to what he is pledged.

KAISER

Listen! Do you hear? “The Kaiser! The Kaiser!” They are clamouring for me. Bülow, those

are not angry shouts. (*Listening.*) No, they are calling for their leader. I must go.

KAISERIN (*trying to stop him*)

William, I have a presentiment of danger!

KAISER

Wife, danger is not a reason for disobeying the call of my people.

KAISERIN

But you are more necessary than ever, William.

KAISER

You are mistaken.

[*The KAISERIN stands back aghast at the KAISER's fierce pallor. Exit the KAISER with the KAISERIN. The CHANCELLOR and VON ETTING stand at doorway and listen. The KAISER's voice is heard for a few seconds, then there are several shots and shrieks and loud voices. The KAISER staggers in, supported by the KAISERIN and the CHANCELLOR.*

KAISER

Nothing at all—a mere bruise. I got dizzy. No, I am not hit; I tottered from dizziness.

Enter GEHEIMRATH VON SCHULTZE.

VON SCHULTZE

Your Majesty will be good enough to lie straight on the floor. (*Unbuttoning and feeling him.*) It's

all right — absolute rest! (*Apart to the CHANCELLOR.*) There may be one in the muscle of the arm. If so, it will be stiff in half an hour. (*Apart to the KAISERIN.*) Get His Majesty to bed as fast as possible.

KAISER (*meanwhile being helped to his feet by VON ETTING and the CHANCELLOR*)

Etting! See whom they have arrested. (*Exit VON ETTING.*) I'm all right again — a little stiff in the arm. I fell against the wall. What the devil did the idiots want to fire at me for? Besides, Bülow, they had no firearms, you said.

CHANCELLOR

They were pistol-shots. But it is not certain that any were fired at Your Majesty.

Enter VON ETTING.

VON ETTING

A few boys and Liebknecht, who was pointed out to the police by his friends (*sarcastically*).

KAISER

I want to see him. By the by, where's the Professor?

PROFESSOR (*just entering*)

Here, Sir.

[*Exit VON ETTING.*]

KAISER

That's right. You did not hear the speech.

PROFESSOR

Yes, Sir, I did. I was in the crowd.

KAISER

Well, was the crowd friendly?

PROFESSOR

Yes, Sir, to you personally.

Enter VON ETTING.

VON ETTING

The guard are bringing him up.

[Stamping of guard. Door thrown open, and LIEBKNECHT in handcuffs enters.

KAISER

Take off his handcuffs. (*Officer does so.*) You don't look like an assassin. You *are* Liebknecht?

LIEBKNECHT

Yes, Sir.

KAISER

What did you want to kill me for?

LIEBKNECHT

I want to kill you? I want to kill nobody. If shots were fired, they were not fired by anybody known to me.

KAISER

Then why have they arrested you?

LIEBKNECHT

I don't know.

KAISER

Have you heard my speech?

LIEBKNECHT

Nobody could hear it.

KAISER

Do you know its tenor? Do you know I am your friend? I knew your father. (*Silence.*) He was an honourable combatant, and though I have fought him and you and all your gang of outlaws all my life, the son of old Liebknecht, who stands alone for what he holds to be right, and is denounced by his fellows, has my respect. Officer, Mr. Liebknecht is free.

[*Exit* OFFICER. LIEBKNECHT *salutes and exit.*

Exit the KAISER on arms of the KAISERIN and VON ETTING.

PROFESSOR

Thank God, that's the end of military dreams in Europe.

CHANCELLOR

The Kaiser has always been a medley of contradictions. He has never really been a soldier. He merely loves the *panache* as a woman loves a fancy gown. Is this the twilight or the dawn?

PROFESSOR

Let us hope it may mean both, and that there will be no night between.

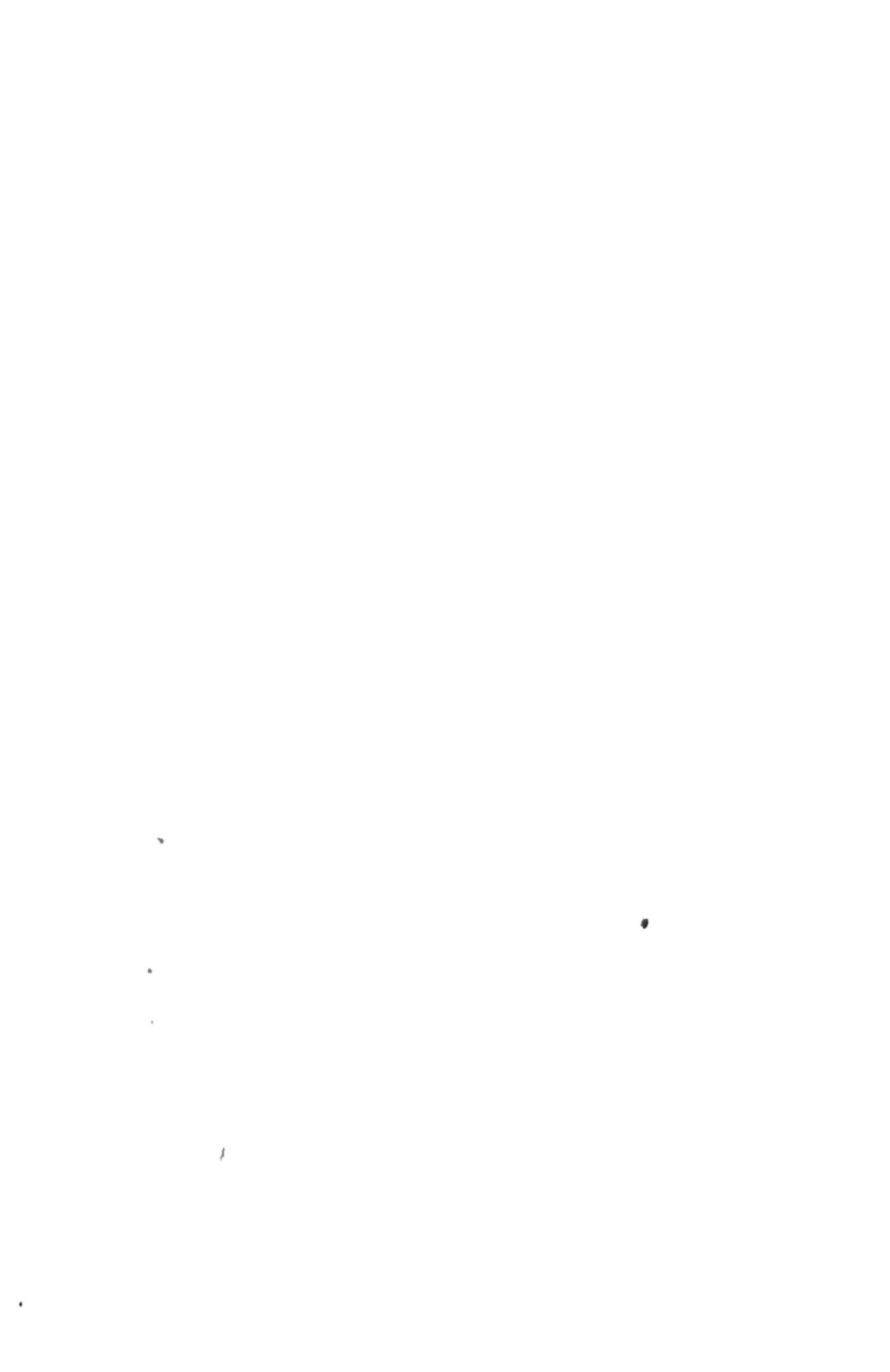
CHANCELLOR

In any case it is the birth of Germany as a civilised State and the death of that *monstrum ingens* the Prussian oligarchy.

PROFESSOR

“The Galilean has won.”

CURTAIN



CHRONOLOGY

CHRONOLOGY

OF EVENTS ON WHICH THE "PHANTASY" IS FOUNDED

1914.

July 19. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* publishes a note stating that people are coming more and more to the view that Austria-Hungary is justified in demanding a clear understanding of her relations with Serbia. "We concur in the hope expressed on different sides that a serious crisis will be avoided by speedy action of the Serbian Government. In any case the common interest of Europe, which has hitherto, in the long-enduring Balkan crisis, preserved the peace among the Great Powers, requires that the discussion which may arise between Austria-Hungary and Serbia shall remain localised."

July 20. The *Berliner Tageblatt* anticipates "warm weeks" again and hopes England will exert influence on the Serbian Government and not encourage Pan-Serbian propaganda.

July 21. Count Berchtold, who spends an hour with the Emperor at Ischl, submits to His Majesty the note the Austro-Hungarian Government is about to hand in to the Belgrade Government. He had sounded Cabinets of European States concerned and found them favourable to the proposed step. (*Vossische Zeitung*.) According to *Tägliche Rundschau*, Serbia and Montenegro are preparing feverishly for war.

July 22. Strikes in Russia. (*Times*.) *Berliner Tageblatt* announces from Prague that officials are returning to their posts and it is expected that trouble will follow the handing of the Austrian note to the Serbian Government.

July 23. Austrian ultimatum handed in at Belgrade at 6 p.m. with forty-eight hours peremptory notice. The *Times* correspondent at The Hague reports that Mr. A. R. Zimmermann, the Burgomaster of Rotterdam, had made to him the following state-

ment in regard to the licence recently granted by the Dutch Government to a German undertaking, the Vulkan Company, for the construction of a private harbour near Vlaardingen on the New Waterway, a few miles west of Rotterdam. "The Government," said the Burgomaster, "has taken a decision which in my opinion will prove to be most important and in its consequences more far-reaching than any action taken by the central authority for some time. They have granted to the Vulkan Company — in other words, to Mr. Thyssen, for the two names are practically synonymous — a licence to establish a private harbour on the New Waterway at Vlaardingen. The harbour will be available for ocean-going vessels and will be equipped for dealing with coal and ore. The ground will also be large enough to allow for repairing-shops and a repairing-wharf. From this and from the fact that the New Waterway is one of the most important outlets to the sea on the whole Continent of Europe, it will be seen that this development is of great importance. All the more so in that this action on the part of the Government constitutes a departure from the principles which hitherto have governed the administration of all harbours, docks, and waterways in Holland — namely, that they should be under public control. Administered on these lines, the Dutch have become great, and Rotterdam itself has become the second port on the Continent of Europe. For a small country these principles have obvious advantages; under any other system important docks and harbours could be sold to any one irrespective of nationality. Rather more than two years ago Mr. Thyssen made great efforts to obtain an independent position on the Waterway. It was soon made evident that the entire public opinion of Rotterdam was strongly opposed to the scheme. The City Council unanimously requested the Burgomaster and Aldermen to use every means at their disposal to oppose the establishment of private docks, and this the city authorities have done. Nevertheless, the Government has now granted a licence to a German firm which is a rival, if not in some respects superior, to Krupp."

The Burgomaster declined to express to the corre-

spondent his opinion as to the future. As a magistrate, he said, it was not for him to criticise the action of the Government or to point out international consequences. (*Times*, July 24, 1914.)

July 24. Breakdown of the Ulster-Home-Rule negotiations.

The *Times* correspondent at The Hague wires that the announcement of the Thyssen concession, whereunder a German harbour is to be constructed on the New Waterway, has caused deep concern there. Strong comments are made about the granting of the concession while the Chamber is in recess and the Government can escape interpellation. According to the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, the Minister responsible had promised Parliament that he would introduce legislation to insure harbours remaining under public control, but after giving the promise he did nothing. No sooner, however, had the recess begun than the Thyssen licence was granted.

Prince Regent of Serbia to Czar: "Il nous est impossible de nous défendre et nous supplions Votre Majesté de nous donner aide le plus tôt possible."

July 25. The *Times* correspondent at Belfast reports that "all preparations have been made for the institution of the Provisional Government, but that it would only be resorted to as a final move in the event of its being made perfectly clear that Ulster is to be put under a form of government to which it will not submit."

He adds that, "though for the present peace continues, there is, as far as I can see, no change in the spirit of Protestant Ulster. The War Office Order published to-day, in which Reservists are forbidden to take any part in the Volunteer movement, has been greeted with contempt. An officer of the Ulster Volunteers of high standing told me that the Order was the subject of laughter and ridicule, and that not a single man would pay the smallest attention to it."

The *Times* Dublin correspondent wires that Unionists "believe that a General Election is now inevitable. They refuse to think that the country will allow the Government to involve it in the horrors of civil war. Everybody admits, however, that a situation of the gravest kind has been created by the failure of the Conference. It will stimulate the activities of the Na-

tional Volunteers and it may precipitate a forward step in Ulster. Nobody here will be surprised if the Provisional Government now asserts itself in a manner which must bring matters to a head. The position in Ireland has become so critical that it must rapidly get either better or worse."

July 25. Kaiser leaves Balestrand, 6.30 P.M.
 Chancellor arrives at night from Hohen Finow.
 At 6.30 P.M. Austrian Minister leaves Belgrade.
 Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna wires St. Petersburg that Count Berchtold is at Ischl.
 Serbia hands in reply to Austro-Hungarian ultimatum within the forty-eight hours.

<i>Austro-Hungarian demands.¹</i>	<i>Serbian reply.</i>
(1) That the Serbian Government give a solemn assurance concerning Serbian propaganda against the Dual Monarchy.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(2) That a Declaration to this effect be published on the front page of the Serbian Official Journal of following Sunday.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(3) That the Declaration also express regret that Serbian officers and officials took part in the anti-Austro-Hungarian propaganda.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(4) That the Serbian Government promise to proceed with the utmost rigour against all guilty persons.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(5) That this Declaration be simultaneously communicated by the King of Serbia to his Army and be published in the Army Official Bulletin.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(6) That all Serbian publications inciting to hatred and contempt of Austria-Hungary be suppressed.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(7) That the Society known as the Narodna Obrana (National Union) be dissolved and its means of propaganda confiscated.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(8) That teachers and teaching in Serbia which tend to foment ill-feeling against Austria-Hungary be eliminated.	<i>Accepted.</i>
(9) That all officers and officials guilty of propaganda against Austria-Hungary be	<i>Accepted.</i>

¹ This table is based on that published in the *Times* of July 27, 1914.

	dismissed from the public service, the Austro-Hungarian Government to communicate to Serbia the names and doings of such officials and officers.	Accepted subject to result of evidence.
(10)	That representatives of Austria-Hungary shall assist Serbia in suppressing in Serbia the movement directed against the territorial integrity of the Dual Monarchy and take part in the judicial proceedings on Serbian territory against persons accessory to the Serajevo crime.	Rejected conditionally.
(11)	Serbia to give Austro-Hungarian Government explanations as to the utterances of high Serbian officials in Serbia and abroad who had spoken disparagingly of the Austro-Hungarian Government after the Serajevo crime.	Not accepted "tel quel."
July 15.	Sazonoff issues note stating that he feels sure that England "ne tardera pas de se ranger du côté de la Russie et de la France en vue de maintenir l'équilibre européen." (Russian Red Book, p. 19.)	
	Germany denies by <i>note verbale</i> having had any knowledge of the "text of the Austrian note" "avant qu'elle ait été remise," and alleges that "elle n'a exercé aucune influence sur son contenu."	
July 26.	Kaiser expected "to-night" at Berlin. Von Moltke arrives at Berlin from Carlsbad. Czar has not abandoned cruise in Finnish skerries. (<i>Times</i> .)	
	Berlin crowd manifest in front of Austrian Embassy; hostile cries in front of Russian Embassy.	
	Austrian mobilisation decreed. (Russian Consul at Prague, to St. Petersburg.)	
July 27.	Kaiser reaches Potsdam from Kiel, by special train, at three in the afternoon. Drives to Neues-Palais. Receives Chancellor immediately.	
	<i>Kreuz-Zeitung</i> of the 28th announces Kaiser intended to go from Potsdam to Wilhelmshöhe as usual.	
	Von Schoen requests France to act with Germany in a moderating sense at St. Petersburg.	
	Czar announced to have left for his cruise.	
	Buchanan wires Grey that Sazonoff proposes direct conversation with Vienna.	
	Goschen wires Grey that Sazonoff intends exchanging views with Berchtold direct.	

July 27. Bunsen wires Grey that Sazonoff had practically reached an understanding with Austro-Hungarian Ambassador.

July 28. Chancellor visits Kaiser at Potsdam in morning. Chancellor and Minister of War visit him in afternoon.

Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.

Sazonoff telegraphs to Russian Ambassador at Berlin: "In consequence of Austro-Hungarian declaration of war against Serbia, mobilisation to-morrow in military districts of Odessa, Kief, Moscow, and Kasan." Assures mobilisation not aimed against Germany. Direct negotiations between St. Petersburg and Vienna broken off.

Chancellor sends for Goschen about Russian mobilisation of fourteen army corps. Points out that Serbian question is a purely Austrian concern.

Bunsen wires Grey that Berchtold declares Austria-Hungary cannot delay war measures against Serbia and declines negotiations on basis of Serbian reply.

Grey telegraphs Goschen and Buchanan that Sazonoff has proposed friendly exchange of views to Austrian Government.

Serbian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome informs Minister for Austria-Hungary that Serbia might still, subject to some explanation as to proposed intervention of Austrian agents, accept whole Austro-Hungarian note.

Bunsen telegraphs Grey that Russian Ambassador had informed him Austro-Hungarian Government did not accept direct discussion between Sazonoff and Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Berlin tells Goschen that Russia is not in a position to make war.

(N.B. No German paper publishes Serbian reply *in extenso*.)

At 10.45 P.M. Kaiser sends first telegram to Czar, which was as follows:—

I have heard with the greatest anxiety of the impression which is caused by the action of Austria-Hungary against Serbia. The unscrupulous agitation which has been going on for years in Serbia has led to the revolting crime of which Archduke Franz Ferdinand has become a victim.

The spirit which made the Serbians' murder their own King and his consort still dominates that country. Doubtless, you will agree with me that both of us, you as well as I, and all other sovereigns, have a common interest to insist that all those who are responsible for this horrible murder shall suffer their deserved punishment. On the other hand, I by no means overlook the difficulty encountered by you and your Government to stem the tide of public opinion. In view of the cordial friendship which has joined us both for a long time with firm ties, I shall use my entire influence to induce Austria-Hungary to obtain a frank and satisfactory understanding with Russia. I hope confidently that you will support me in my efforts to overcome all difficulties which may yet arise.

Your most sincere and devoted friend and cousin,
WILLIAM.

July 28. Sazonoff wires impression that Germany "plutôt favorable à l'intransigeance de l'Autriche; attitude allemande particulièrement alarmante."

July 29. Prince Henry arrives from England.
Military and Naval Council at Potsdam.
1 P.M. Czar telegraphs to Kaiser.
Chancellor sends for Goschen; says it is too late to discuss on basis of Serbian reply. Assurances of desire for peace.
Buchanan wires Grey that Sazonoff says direct negotiation with Vienna has been proposed by German Ambassador.
Goschen wires Grey that Von Jagow thinks suggestion of making Serbia's reply basis of negotiations might have precipitated the declaration of war.
Crown Prince arrives at Potsdam in the morning. Passes an hour with Kaiser and Kaiserin. Then returns to Marmor-Palais. Kaiser takes a short walk in Park of Sans-Souci.
Bunsen wires Grey of mobilisation of Russian corps, ordered to operate on Austrian frontier.
Buchanan telegraphs Grey that Sazonoff says order for mobilisation against Austria will be issued day Austria crosses Serbian frontier.
Chancellor wires Lichnowsky to tell Grey that he is endeavouring to mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg.
Kaiser telegraphs to Czar, 6.30 P.M.

July 29. Chancellor sends for Goschen (night). He had just returned from Potsdam. Makes bid for British neutrality. Declares Germany bound to assist Austria-Hungary if attacked by Russia.

Sazonoff to Iswolsky:—

The German Ambassador to-day informed me of the decision of his Government to mobilise if Russia does not stop her military preparations. Now, in point of fact, we only began these preparations in consequence of the mobilisation already undertaken by Austria, and owing to her evident unwillingness to accept any means of arriving at a peaceful settlement of her dispute with Serbia. As we cannot comply with the wishes of Germany, we have no alternative but to hasten on our own military preparations and to assume that war is probably inevitable. Please inform the French Government of this and add that we are sincerely grateful to them for the declaration which the French Ambassador made to me on their behalf, to the effect that we could count fully upon the assistance of our ally, France. In the existing circumstances, that declaration is especially valuable to us.

(Communicated to the Russian Ambassadors in Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Germany.)

Queen Sophia of Greece, who was at Eastbourne and was to go on a visit to Potsdam, returns direct to Greece.

July 30. At 1 A.M. Kaiser telegraphs to Czar, who is at Peterhof.

Sazonoff sees Czar at Peterhof in the morning.

Crown Princess arrives at Potsdam from Mecklenburg.

At 1 P.M. Czar telegraphs to Kaiser.

German Ambassador enquires on what conditions Russia would consent to suspend armaments. Sazonoff dictates to him the following formula:—

Si l'Autriche, reconnaissant que la question austro-serbe a assumé le caractère d'une question européenne, se déclare prête à éliminer de son ultimatum les points qui portent atteinte aux droits souverains de la Serbie, la Russie s'engagent à cesser ses préparatifs militaires.

Russian Ambassador at Berlin wires that German Minister for Foreign Affairs finds formula "inacceptable pour l'Autriche."

July 30. Goschen telegraphs Grey that he has been sent for by Minister for Foreign Affairs. Latter suggested that Grey should get Russia to agree to accept mediation on basis of occupation of Belgrade, no further steps to be taken. European peace might then be preserved. He knew France did not want war.

German Ambassador at Rome told Rodd that Serbia might demand peace on occupation of Belgrade and Germany might then devise formula.

Grey wires Buchanan that Lichnowsky had informed him that Germany would endeavour to influence Austria, after occupation of Belgrade, to promise not to advance farther while Powers endeavoured to arrange satisfaction to Austria.

Grey declines Chancellor's bid for British neutrality. Makes counter-proposal to assure Germany against aggressive policy by France, Russia, and England jointly or severally.

Poincaré informs Bertie that Russian Government had been informed by Germany that unless mobilisation stopped, she would mobilise. This was modified to requesting to be informed on what terms Russia would demobilise. Answer was, that Austria give assurance that she would respect Serbia's sovereignty and submit certain of her demands to international discussion. Urged England to inform Germany that she would aid France. This would assure peace.

At midday Emperor Franz Josef, from Ischl, and heir to throne arrive at Vienna and alight at Schoenbrunn.

July 31. Kaiser moves to Berlin.
Czar telegraphs to Kaiser (hour not given).
Kaiser telegraphs to Czar, 2 P.M.
Kaiser makes speech from balcony of Schloss.
Goschen wires Grey that Chancellor told him that he was about to confer with Kaiser and that Russia was making active military preparations on frontier in spite of Czar's appeal to Kaiser.

Goschen wires Grey that he had spent an hour with Minister for Foreign Affairs. Impossible to consider any proposal until answer from Russia as to countermanding mobilisation.

Buchanan wires Grey that Russia decided to mobil-

ise because Austria was moving troops against Russia as well as Serbia.

July 31. Orders given at St. Petersburg for general mobilisation.

Goschen, later, wires Grey that Russia is mobilising generally. Berchtold, as regards Grey's proposal, was to get the Emperor's instructions "this morning."

German Government decrees *Kriegsgefahrzustand*.

Bunsen wires Grey that Forgach (Under-Secretary) still hopes for preservation of peace. Telegrams passing between Kaiser and Czar and St. Petersburg and Vienna.

Lichnowsky informs Grey that discussion has been resumed between St. Petersburg and Vienna.

Buchanan wires Russian formula as follows:—

'Si l'Autriche consent à arrêter la marche de ses armées sur le territoire serbe, et si, reconnaissant que le conflit austro-serbe a assumé le caractère d'une question d'intérêt européen, elle admet que les Grandes Puissances examinent la satisfaction que la Serbie pourrait accorder au gouvernement d'Autriche-Hongrie sans laisser porter atteinte à ses droits d'État souverain et à son indépendance, la Russie s'engage à conserver son attitude expectante.'

German Government wires twelve hours ultimatum to St. Petersburg.

German Government wires Paris asking whether France intends to remain neutral, with eighteen hours for reply.

Von Schoen gives notice to France requiring declaration as to her neutrality within eighteen hours, delay expiring on Saturday at 1 P.M.

British Government enquires of French and German Governments whether they intend to respect Belgian neutrality.

Aug. 1. Czar telegraphs to Kaiser, 2 P.M.

Kaiser telegraphs to Czar (no hour given).

Bertie wires Grey that President Poincaré told him Russian general mobilisation followed Austro-Hungarian.

1 P.M. Von Schoen telegraphs Chancellor that Prime Minister, in answer to his enquiry, had declared, "France would do what her interests dictated."

Aug. 1. 5 P.M. French notice of mobilisation (orders given at 3.40 P.M.).

Viviani declares this had become necessary owing to German mobilisation. Under *Kriegsgefahrzustand* the Germans had called up six classes. Three were sufficient to bring their covering troops up to war strength. Remaining three being reserves, this was mobilisation under another name.

Sazonoff sends secret wire that German Ambassador had declared at twelve midnight that if within twelve hours (midday) Russia did not commence demobilisation, Germany would mobilise.

Goschen wires Grey that Germany's orders are given for mobilisation, navy and army, first day, August 2.

Berlin correspondent of the *Times* wires that the Kaiser and members of the Royal Family drove into Berlin from Potsdam towards three o'clock and had a tremendous reception. "They passed in open motor-cars down the great middle way of *Unter den Linden*, which is reserved for ceremonial occasions. The first car contained the Emperor, wearing the full-dress uniform of Cuirassiers of the Guard, and the Empress, who wore a claret-coloured dress. The Emperor, whose face was very grave, kept his hand at the salute all the way down, while the Empress bowed acknowledgment of the cheers of the vast crowd." (*Times*, August 3, 1914.)

Bunsen wires Grey of general mobilisation of Austrian army and fleet.

{ Mensdorff tells Grey that Austria had not "banged the door" on compromise.

Grey wires Goschen that "Sazonoff announces that Austrian Ambassador declared readiness of his Government to discuss substance of Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. Sazonoff proposes discussion take place in London." (Communicated to the Powers.)

Grey wires Buchanan that Austrian Government has informed German Government of its readiness to negotiate, if Russia will stop mobilising; preservation of peace seems possible.

Austro-Hungarian Ambassador calls on M. Viviani and declares Austria's readiness to discuss "fond du conflit" with the other Powers.

Aug. 1. Bunsen declares (in his despatch to Grey of September 1) that Russian Ambassador (Schekebo) informed him that Russia and Austria were practically agreed.

Mensdorff calls Grey's special attention to fact that conversations with St. Petersburg had not been broken off by Austria and that latter had given assurance to Russia that neither an infraction of Serbia's sovereign rights nor acquisition of Serbia's territory was contemplated.

Count Szapary (Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg) to Count Berchtold:—

Petersburg, 1st August.

At an interview to-day with Sazonoff, I informed him I had received instructions, but I had first to point out that I did not know what was the present situation at Vienna created by the Russian general mobilisation. My communication was, therefore, subject to this. I said that your communications treated of the misunderstanding as if we had rejected further negotiations with Russia. This I assured him was a mistake. Your Excellency was not only quite ready to negotiate with Russia on the widest basis, but was also in particular inclined to submit our *Notentext* to discussion in so far as its interpretation was concerned.

Sazonoff expressed his satisfaction at this proof of good-will, but he thought that success was more likely to be achieved on the neutral ground of London.

Goschen wires Grey that he had argued that Germany had only to wait while Austria and Russia were coming to terms. Secretary of State says Germany could not wait, as she had speed and Russia numbers.

At 7.10 P.M. German Ambassador at St. Petersburg delivers declaration of war to Russia.

Aug. 2. German force enters Grand Duchy of Luxemburg.

Grey gives Cambon assurance regarding protection of Channel and hostile naval operations generally against France.

Aug. 3. France offers Belgium five army corps. Belgium declines them.

Italy replies to Germany that, latter having declared aggressive character of Austria's action, she was not bound by her purely defensive alliance.

Aug. 4. Germany invades Belgium.

Aug. 4. Goschen has several interviews at Wilhelmstrasse endeavouring to persuade Germany to draw back, but in vain, and asks for his passports. Handed in telegraphic report at nine, which never reached Foreign Office.

The form of British declaration of war was that unless Germany undertook not to proceed farther in Belgium, British Government would have to take all steps to uphold Belgium's neutrality.

Aug. 7. Russian Ambassador (Schekebo) at Vienna leaves Embassy, Berchtold stating that, in view of menacing attitude of Russia in Austro-Serbian conflict and "the fact that Russia had commenced hostilities against Germany," Austria-Hungary considered herself also at war with Russia.

Aug. 12. Dumaine (French Ambassador) leaves Vienna.

Bunsen and Mensdorff leave Vienna and London respectively.

Dec. 5. According to Giolitti's speech of this date, Austria had prepared an ultimatum to Serbia in August, 1913, and asked Italy if she would support her if she went to war. Italy did not consider this a "casus foederis."

1915.

Jan. 13. Count Berchtold resigns. Succeeded by Baron Stephen Burian.

Jan. 23. Baron Burian visits Berlin.

March 1. Germans accuse the French of using shells which discharge an asphyxiating gas.

April 8. Conditions of agreement communicated by Sonnino to Austria-Hungary stipulate that Trieste and adjoining territory be constituted into an autonomous and independent state and "porto franco." No military, either Austrian or Italian, to enter it. Italian sovereignty over Valona to be recognized by Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary to give up all interest in Albania. Trentino to be ceded up to boundaries according to Treaty of February 28, 1810.

April 10. Squitti (Italian Minister at Nisch) telegraphs that, according to confidential information, separate peace between Austria-Hungary and Russia is possible.

April 12. Germans accuse Russians of using shells which discharge asphyxiating gas.

April 13. Telegram similar to that of Squitti from Cucchi (Italian Minister at Sofia), object being for Austria-Hungary to have her hands free to deal with Italy.

April 15. Bellati (Italian Ambassador at Berlin) telegraphs that people are speaking of separate peace between Germany and Austria-Hungary and Russia.

April 16. Germans renew accusation of the French using asphyxiating gas.

April 21. Germans use asphyxiating gas and gain nine kilometres.

April 22. General warning issued by German Embassy at Washington against travelling by English liners.

Warning specially repeated in respect of the Lusitania.

May 1. Lusitania sails.

May 3. Sonnino (Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs) declares Treaty of Alliance between Italy and Austria-Hungary cancelled.

May 4. Notification of cancellation communicated to Baron Burian.

May 7. Japan delivers ultimatum to China, forty-eight hours for reply.

Lusitania torpedoed.

May 8. Kaiser on southeastern front.

Von Bülow has hour's audience of King of Italy.

May 9. China accepts Japan's ultimatum.

May 11. At Milan demonstration against German Consulate.

May 12. Demonstration at Rome against Giolitti as champion of peace.

May 13. Demonstration at Rome against Giolitti and neutrality.

May 16. D'Annunzio, the famous Italian writer, speaks in same sense in the Costanzi theatre. Demonstrations at Florence and Venice follow. Processions with coffins bearing flags, "Here lies with Giolitti the dignity of Italy."

The *Giornale d'Italia* states that an Anglo-Italian agreement for immediate attack by Italy has been concluded.

May 17. The *Popolo d'Italia* (Milan) states that alliance with Austria-Hungary was cancelled on May 4, and that agreement is now made with Allies to attack Austria-Hungary on May 24.

May 17. Manifestation in favour of war at Naples, two hundred professors and the Rector of University at their head. Manifestations at Padua and Parma. At Palermo attack on German Consulate. In Turin state of siege declared on account of barricades and fighting between rival partisans.

May 18. Von Bethmann-Hollweg states in Reichstag that Austria-Hungary was prepared (*inter alia*) to allow Trieste to have an Italian university and be a free port with an Italian administration.
At Rome fifty thousand persons manifest in favour of war, headed by Mayor Colonna and addressed by D'Annunzio.

May 20. At sitting of Chamber, Italian Socialists declare they will vote against the war, but, if declared, they will do their best to bring it to a speedy and successful conclusion.
Mr. Asquith announces that steps are being taken to place Government on a national basis. Completed on May 28.

May 23. Italian declaration of war handed by Italian Ambassador to Burian.

May 25. Von Bülow and Macchio (Austro-Hungarian Ambassador) leave Rome. Also Von Mühlberg (German Minister to the Vatican) and Von Schönburg-Hartenstein (Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to Vatican).

May 26. Italian Ambassador at Berlin (Bellati) leaves.
Kaiserin at Berlin visits the Orangerie-Lazarett and spends over an hour with the wounded.
Prince and Princess von Bülow arrive in Berlin at 9.05 A.M. (Anhalter Bahnhof) with some one hundred and twenty persons.
Herr von Mühlberg had accompanied Prince von Bülow as far as Lugano.

May 28. Chancellor makes statement in Reichstag on Italian defection.

June 28. Dr. Dernburg back in Berlin.

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
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